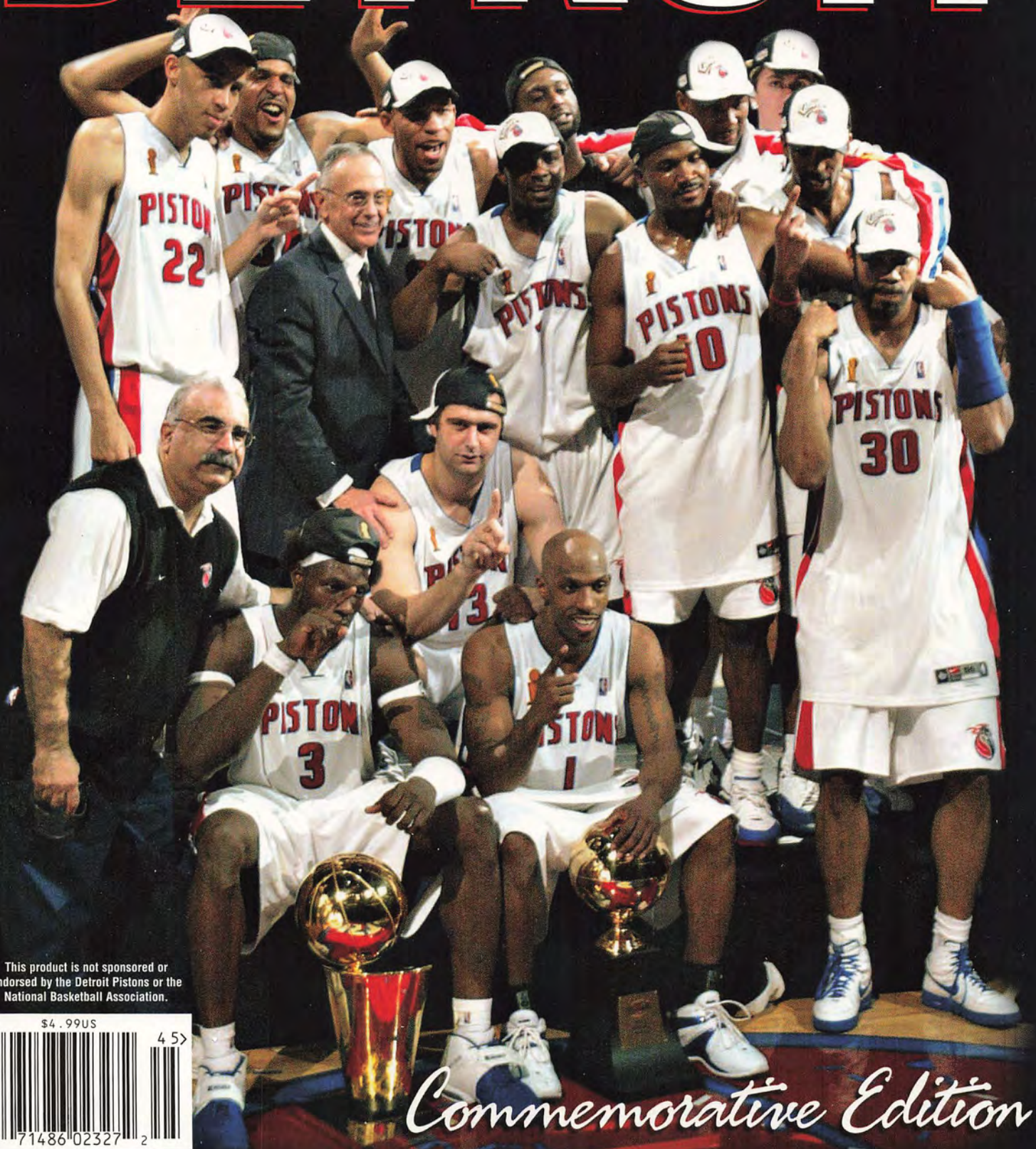
2004 *World Champions*

DETROIT



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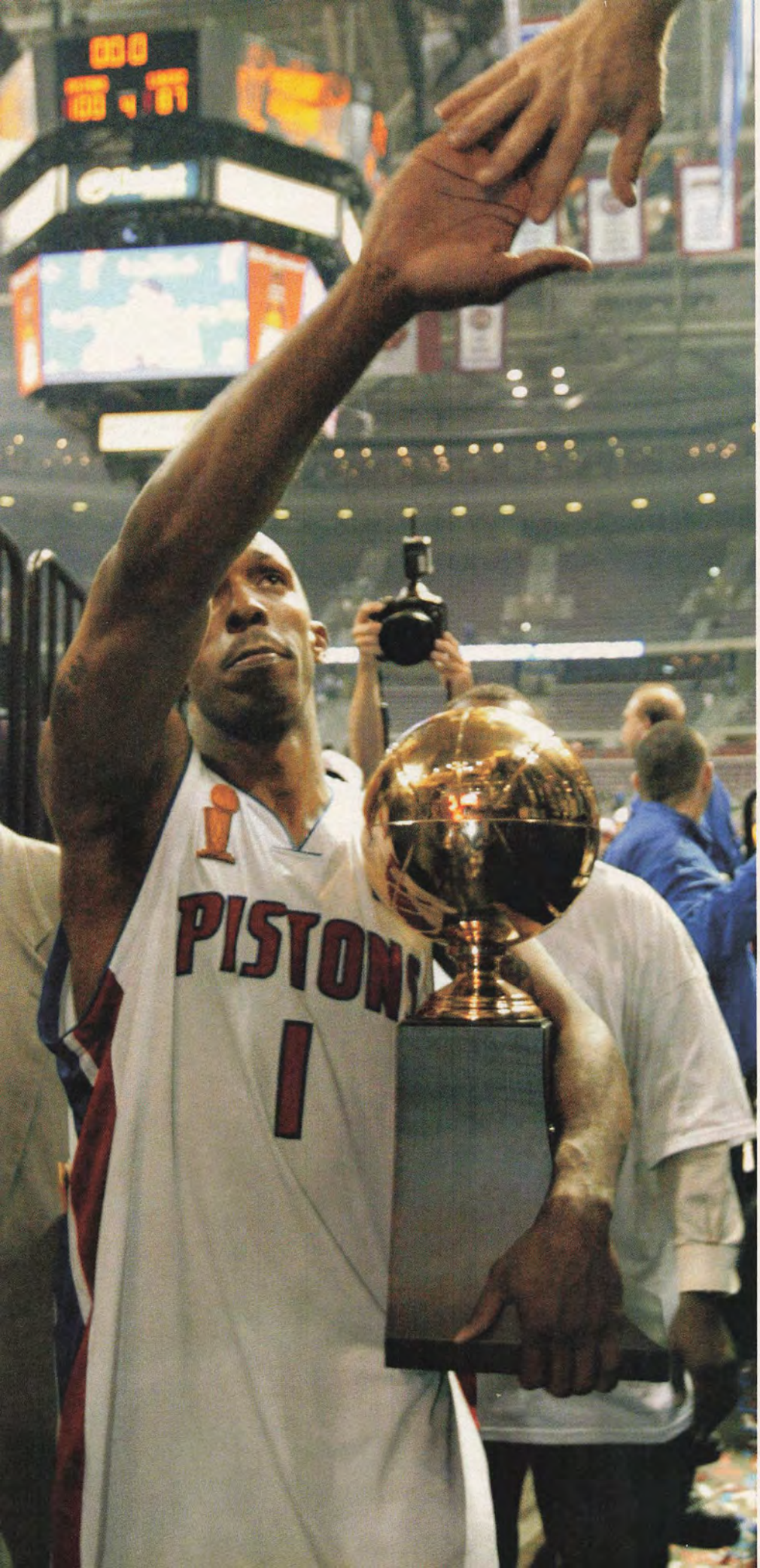

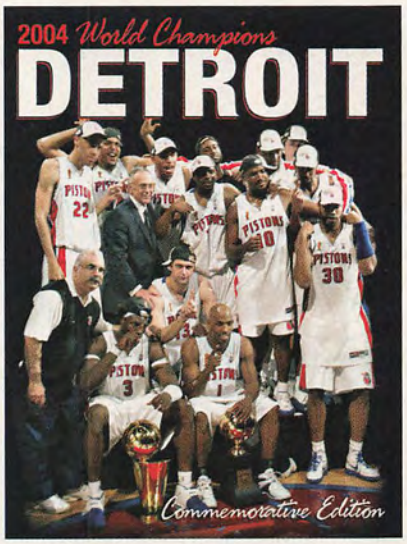

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Marc Masesso

CREATIVE DIRECTOR
Karen Cox

EXECUTIVE EDITOR
Betsy Gartrell-Judd

COLOR SEPARATIONS
Jim Cox

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR
Jason Heimke

PRESIDENT/CEO
Michael M. Meyers

PUBLISHER
Kyle Cox

VICE PRESIDENT OF MARKETING
Nancy J. Price

NEWSSTAND MANAGER
Mike Gerardo

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY
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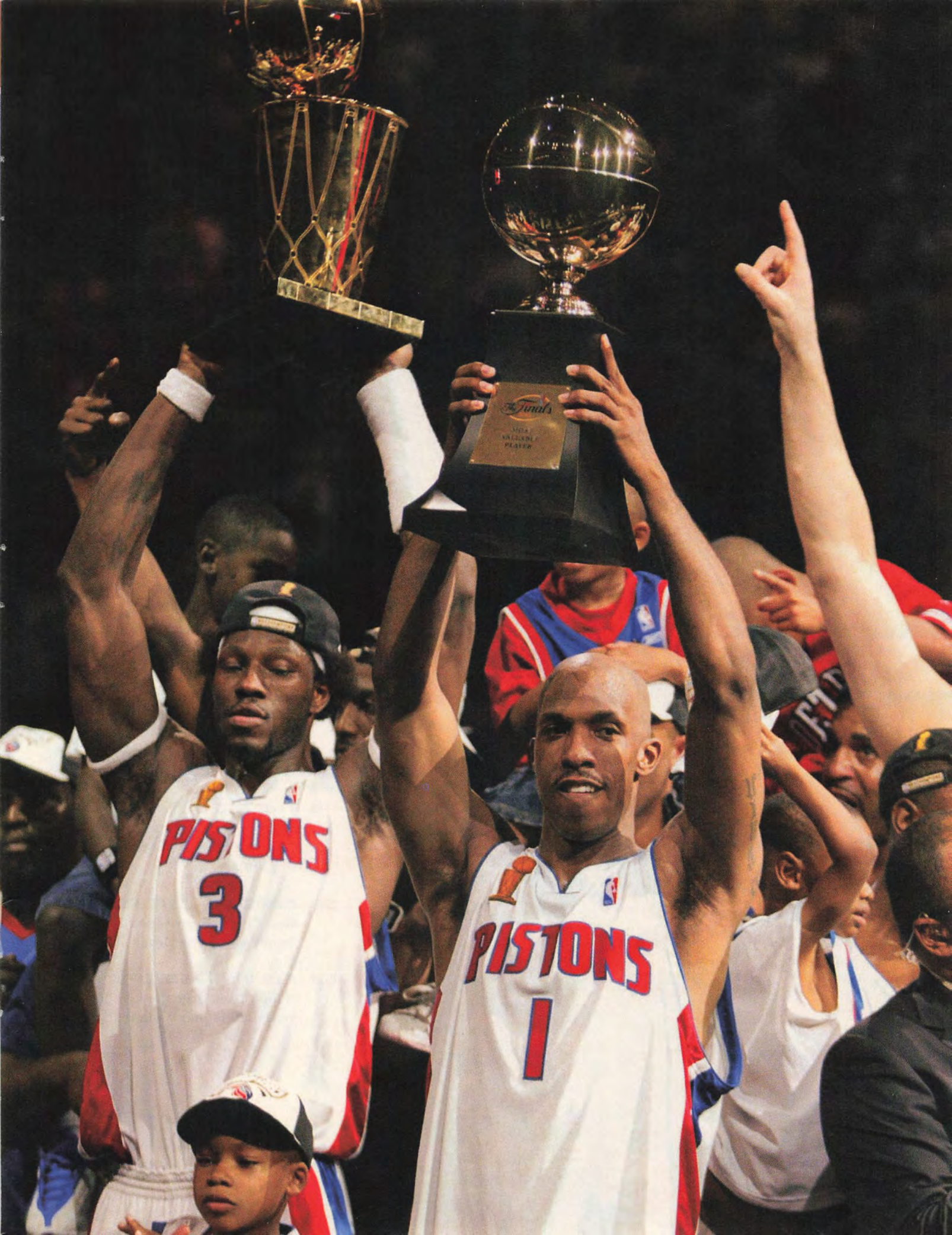
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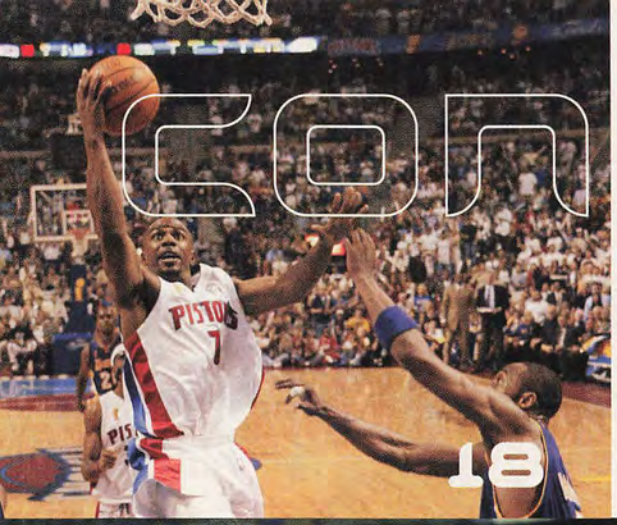

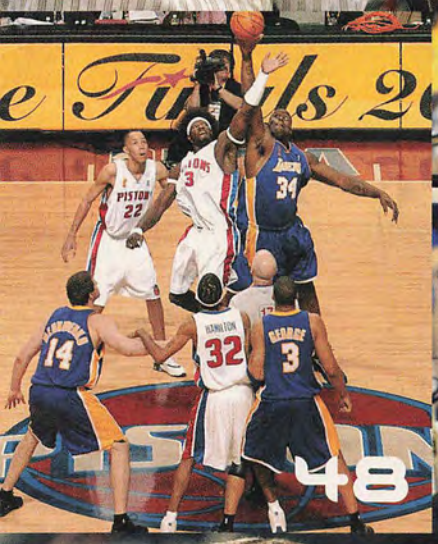

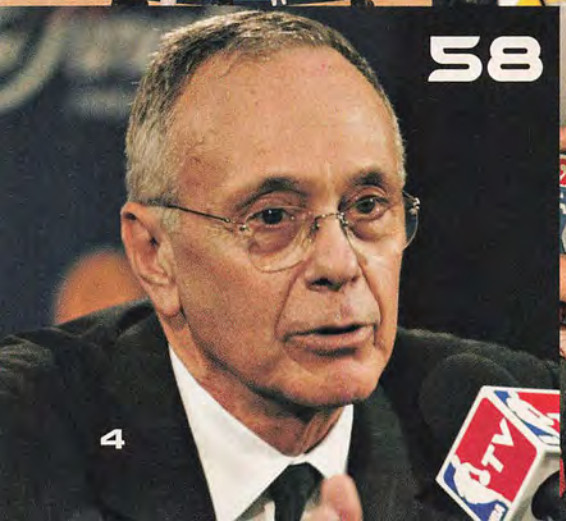

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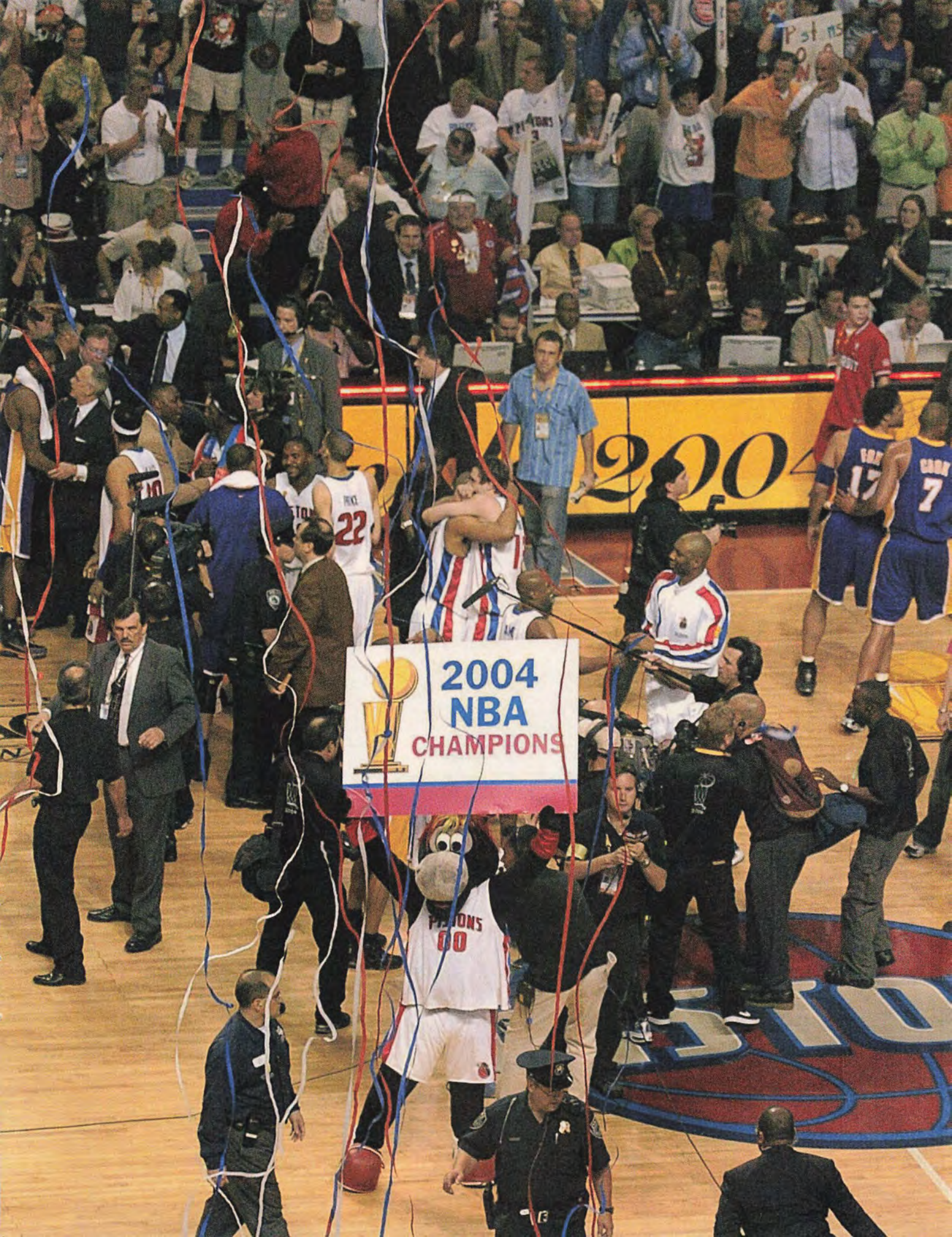
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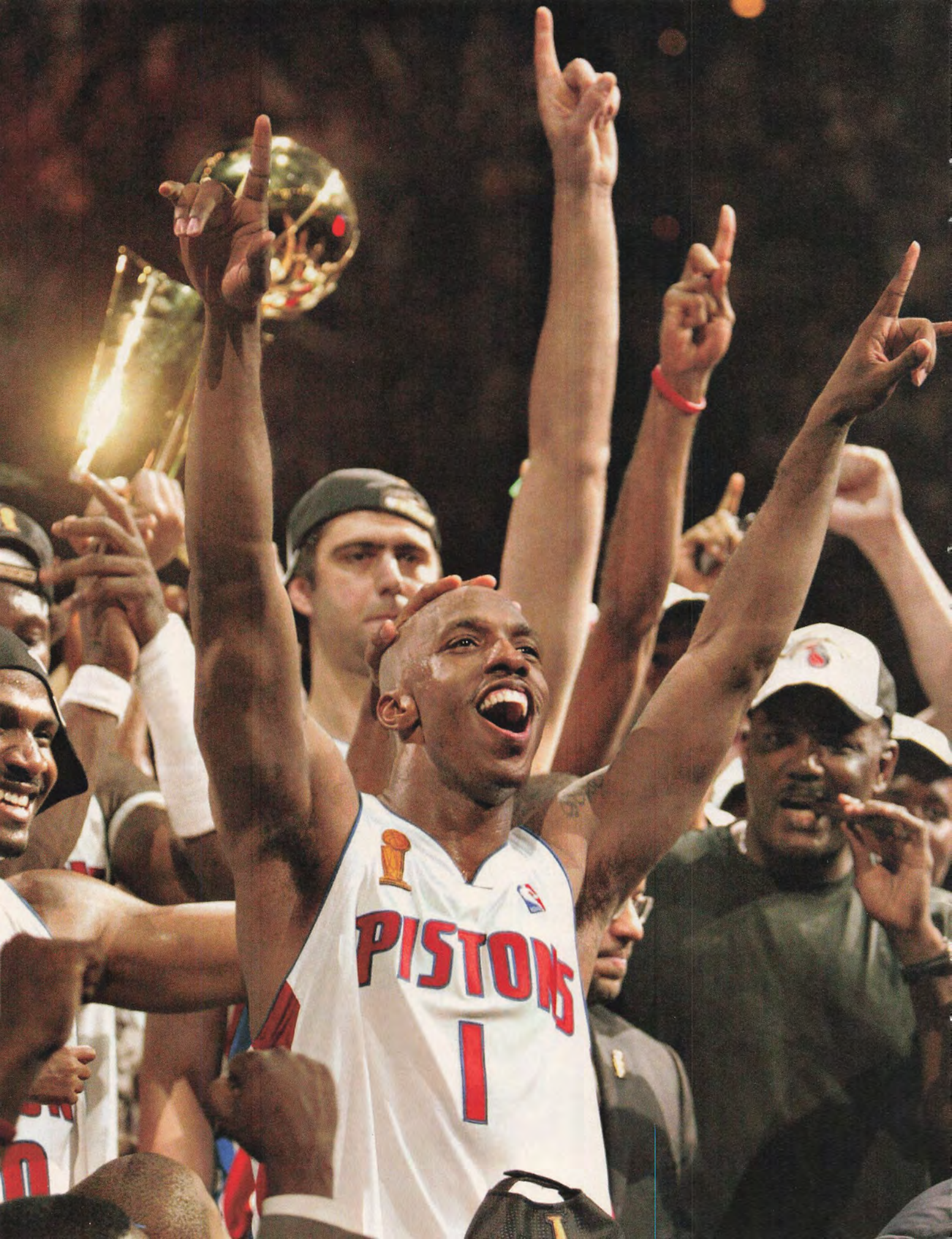
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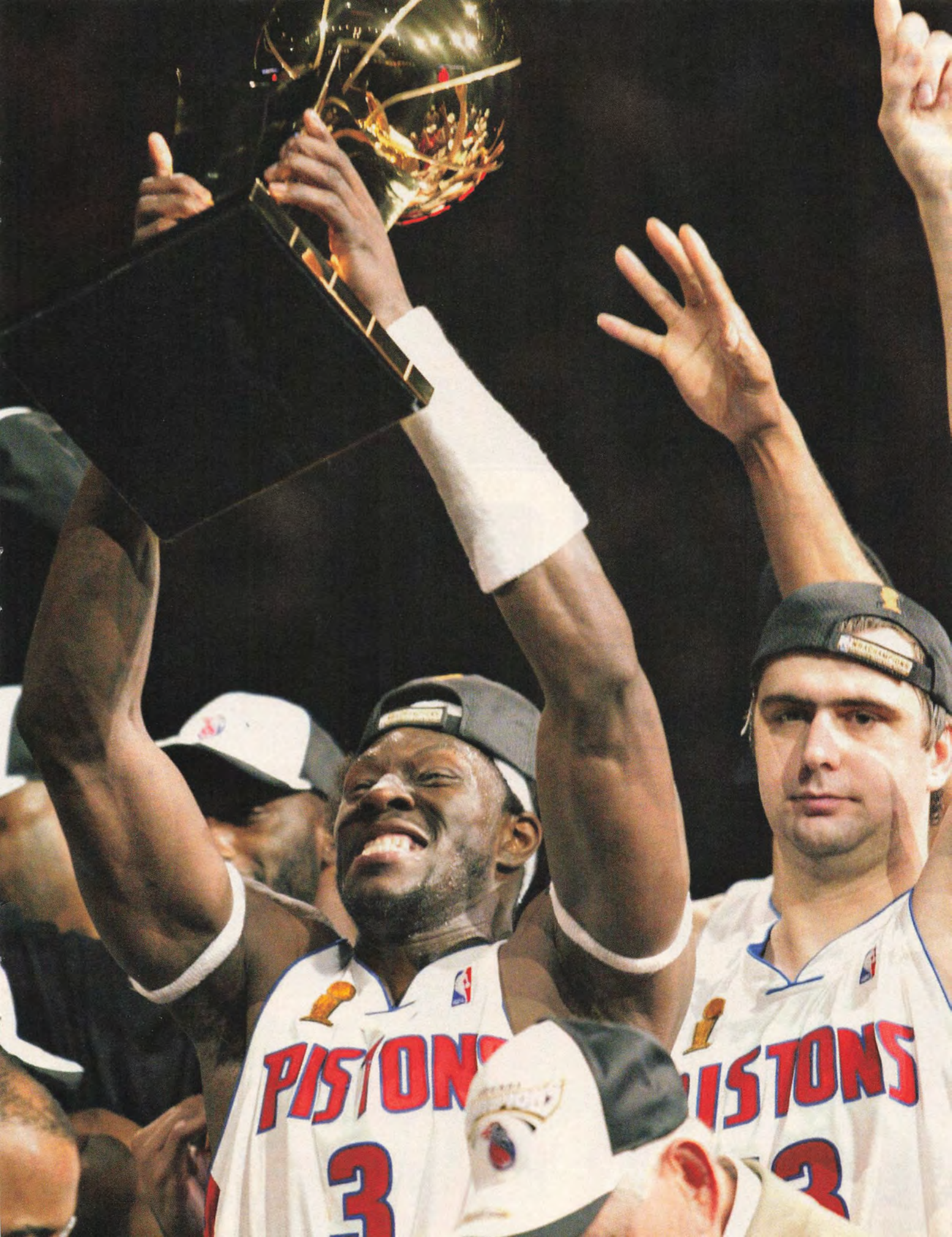
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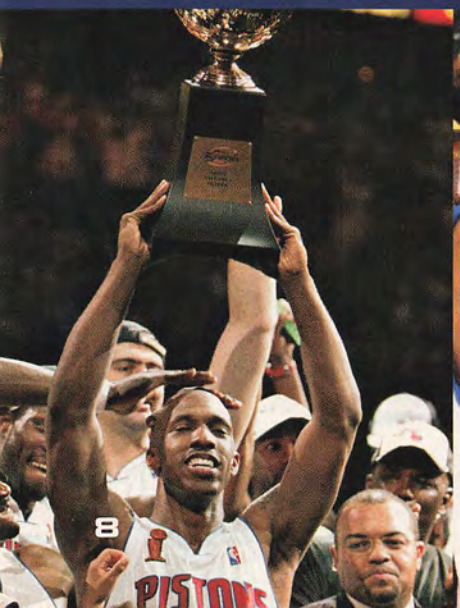
detroit ROCKS

pistons win!

PISTONS ROCK THE WORLD AS THEY STUN L.A. IN 5

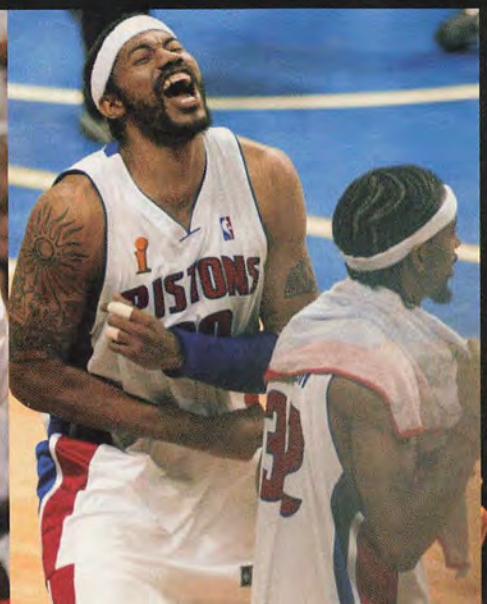


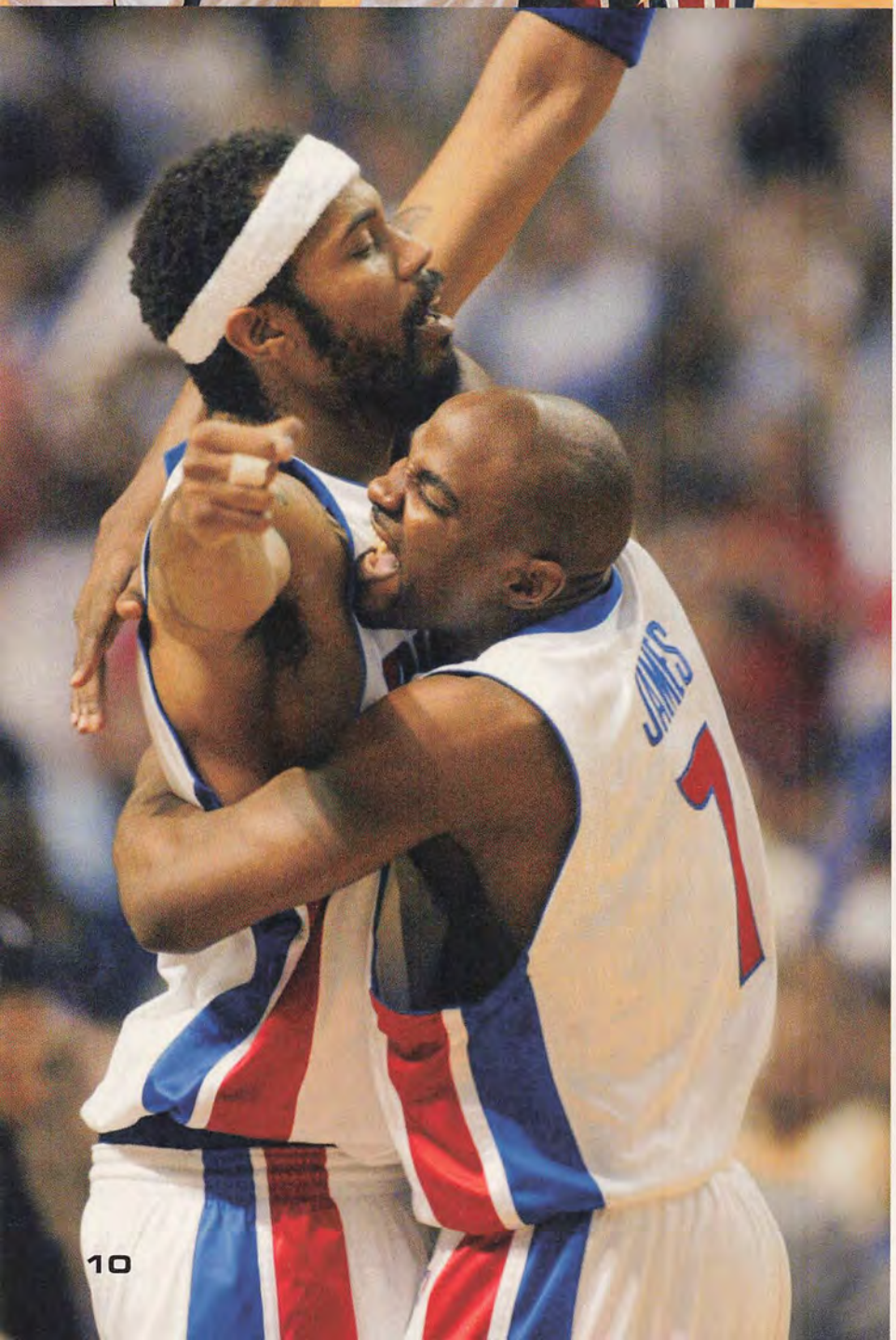
In what will probably go down as one of the greatest, most monumental upsets of all time, the Detroit Pistons shocked the world in stunning fashion with a 4-1 series win over the Los Angeles Lakers in the 2004 NBA Finals.

But the road wasn't an easy one by any means: The Pistons had to run through the league's finest, the teams nobody thought could be conquered. While most experts just considered them a speed bump on the road to the NBA Finals, coach Larry Brown's "team first" approach proved to be the winning ingredient in a magnificent postseason journey.

Most Pistons fans will either tell you that Ben Wallace was the key with his defense, or that Tayshaun Prince was the X-factor with his all-around game. Many will even suggest that Billups and Hamilton are the best backcourt in the game today, or that Larry Brown might be the greatest teacher since John Wooden. Whatever reason you choose, they all seem valid after this magical adventure to their first title in 14 years.

As soon as the playoffs began, the task was simple... yet undeniably difficult. >>





detroit ROCKS

EAST QUARTERS

(milwaukee vs. detroit)

detroit wins series 4-1

This was a mismatch from the get-go. Even though Milwaukee pulled off a Game 2 upset on the road, they just lacked the size and talent to hold on against the Pistons. Ben Wallace continued his rugged play in the middle with 12 rebounds and 4 blocks in the series clinching the 91-77 victory. The Bucks were clearly outmatched at every position and had no answer for Tayshaun Prince and Richard Hamilton. Championship teams are supposed to dispose of weaker opponents quickly, and that's just what Larry Brown's bunch did in the playoff opener.

EAST SEMIS

(new jersey vs. detroit)

detroit wins series 4-3

The team that was supposed to be the East's best ran into a buzz saw in Detroit as this series went the limit, never short of thrills and excitement. After demolishing the Nets in Game 1 with an embarrassing 78-56 win, the Pistons continued home dominance to start the series with a 95-80 Game 2 beating.

As soon as the scene shifted, so did the momentum. Both Nets wins were by double figures, and all of a sudden we had a 2-2 no-holds-barred warfare series on our hands. Game 5 saw a Chauncey Billups half-court shot at the buzzer to tie the game, leading to three overtimes and a grueling and gut-wrenching 127-120 road win by New Jersey.

If that twist wasn't enough for you, the real turn came when Detroit stunned a sold-out Nets crowd with a crucial 81-75 Game 6 road win. What was supposed to be en epic Game 7 turned into a lopsided 90-69 plastering that had Detroit going onto the Eastern Conference Finals. The Pistons held Jason Kidd to zero points in final, and what was arguably the league's best backcourt continued to produce with Billups and Hamilton netting 22 and 21 points.

When the series was on the line, Detroit used its stifling defense to create constant mayhem on the Nets' end. There was too much Ben Wallace, too much Chauncey Billups and too much desire. The Pistons could not be denied. >>

ben wallace

NAME:
Ben Wallace

AGE: 29
HEIGHT: 6-9
WEIGHT: 240 lbs.

POS: Power Forward

BORN:
September 10, 1974
White Hall, AL

COLLEGE: Virginia Union

EXPERIENCE: 8 years

2004 LEAGUE LEADERS

- 3rd in the NBA in Rebounds Per Game (12.4)
- 2nd in the NBA in Blocks Per Game (3.04)
- 8th in the NBA in Steals Per Game (1.77)
- 7th in the NBA in Technical Fouls (13)

rasheed wallace

NAME:
Rasheed Wallace

AGE: 29
HEIGHT: 6-11
WEIGHT: 230 lbs.

POS: Forward/Center

BORN:
September 17, 1974
Philadelphia, PA

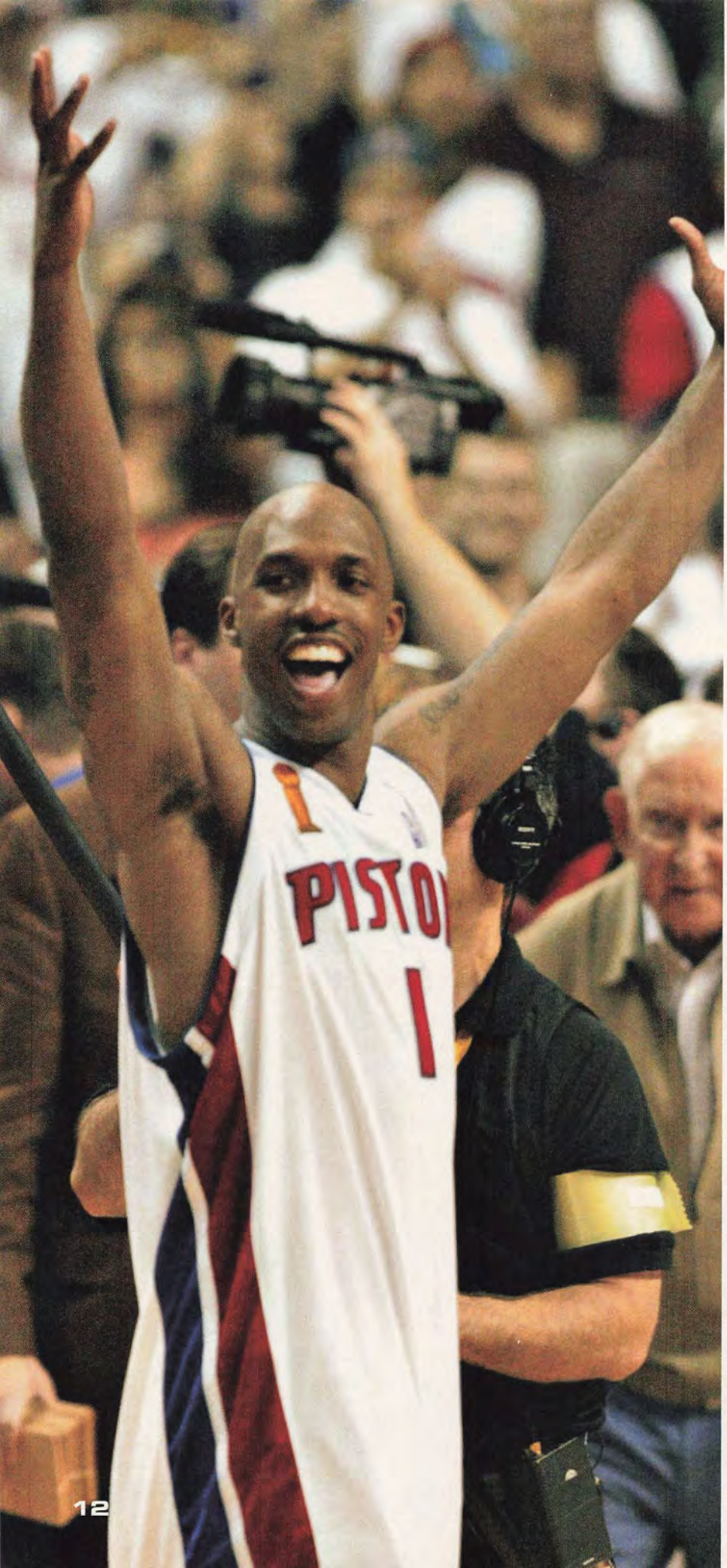
COLLEGE: Virginia Union

DRAFTED: 1995, 1st round, 4th pick by the Washington Wizards

EXPERIENCE: 9 years

2004 LEAGUE LEADERS

- 2nd in the NBA in Technical Fouls (18)



detroit ROCKS

EAST FINALS

(Indiana vs. Detroit)

Detroit wins series 4-2

This was the match-up most predicted when the playoffs began. Although the result may have surprised many, those who play the game know the better team usually wins.

Detroit once again displayed a swarming defense filled with high-octane fury and tenacity, the kind that was seen only around these parts back in the glory days of the 80s. Simply put, no team broke 85 in a single game, and in three of the Pistons four wins, they held Indiana under 70 points. That's called getting the job done, folks.

Both teams struggled to find a rhythm offensively as the series clincher was a 69-65 final. In the pivotal Game 2, Detroit delivered a real blow when Rip Hamilton scored 23 points and the Pistons' defense held Ron Artest and Jermaine O'Neal to a paltry 29 points combined. Once the home court advantage was lost by Indiana, you could get a sense that more bad news was going to be coming their way, spelling an end to the season. The big play of the game was Tayshaun Prince's unbelievable block on a breakaway lay-up attempt by Reggie Miller.

"I saw him in my rearview mirror," Miller said. "In hindsight, I should have dunked it, but I thought I had a few steps on him." The Pacers were left seeing stars, and could never really recover enough to battle the series away from the iron-tight grip Brown's bunch had on it.

Rasheed Wallace called out, "I told you so!" to the Indiana fans as he walked off the court, making good on his guarantee of a victory.

NBA FINALS

(Los Angeles vs. Detroit)

Detroit wins series 4-1

History doesn't often write upsets as big as this. Well, the time has come.

Detroit completed an improbable run for the title with a mesmerizing Finals win over the Lakers that left much of the world — let alone the basketball world — shocked and amazed. We all should've seen this coming, right? >>

NAME:
Richard Hamilton

AGE: 26
HEIGHT: 6-7
WEIGHT: 193 lbs.

POS: Shooting Guard

BORN:
February 14, 1978
Coatesville, PA

COLLEGE: Connecticut

DRAFTED: 1999, 1st round, 7th pick by the Washington Wizards

EXPERIENCE: 5 years

2004 LEAGUE LEADERS

- 28th in the NBA in Points Per Game (17.6)

NAME:
Chauncey Billups

AGE: 27
HEIGHT: 6-3
WEIGHT: 202 lbs.

POS: Point Guard

BORN:
September 25, 1976
Denver, CO

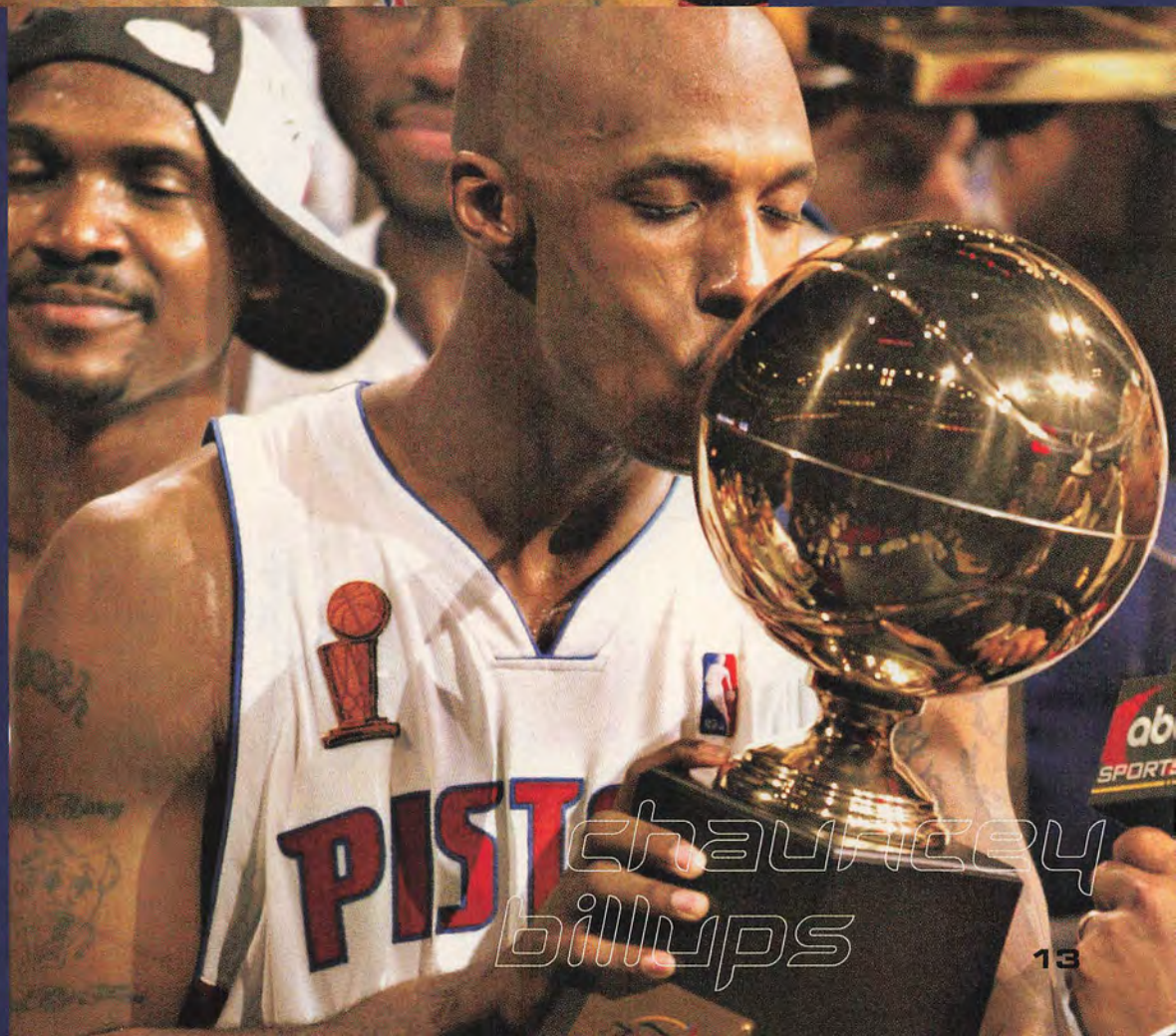
COLLEGE: Colorado

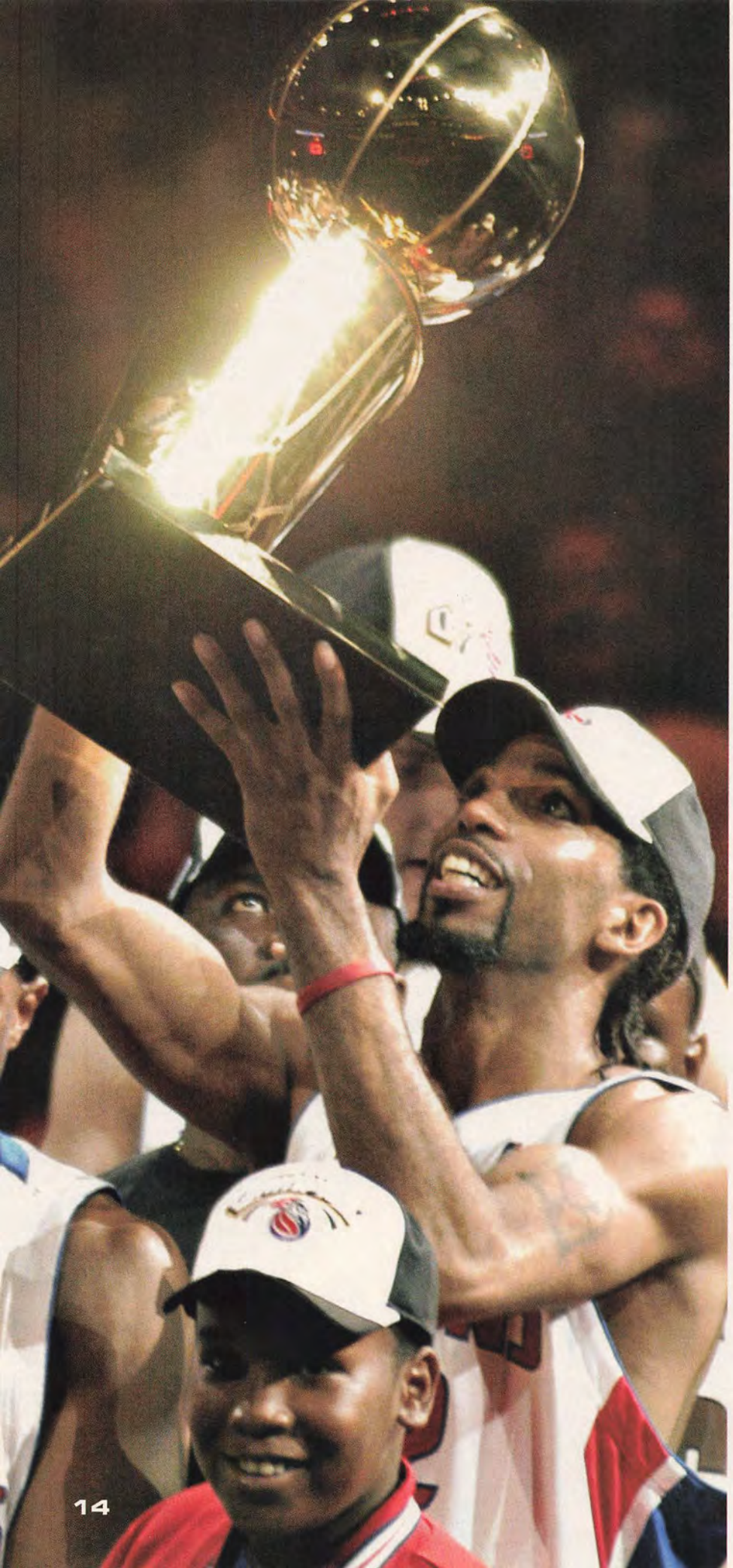
DRAFTED: 1997, 1st round, 3rd pick by the Boston Celtics

EXPERIENCE: 7 years

2004 LEAGUE LEADERS

- 15th in the NBA in Assists Per Game (5.7)
- 6th in the NBA in Free Throw Percentage (.878)
- 34th in the NBA in Points Per Game (16.9)





detroit ROCKS

Wrong! The Lakers were made to win the championship this year, built to dominate and shatter all the records. That's exactly why Karl Malone and Gary Payton came over to Tinseltown at cheap rates, right? Somebody forgot to tell the Pistons what was supposed to happen. All they did was believe in themselves, and always put the team ahead of anything personal. Larry Brown implemented the system and the players bought into it. But downing the mighty Lakers in what some people are calling the "first 5-game sweep ever" was simply too much to comprehend.

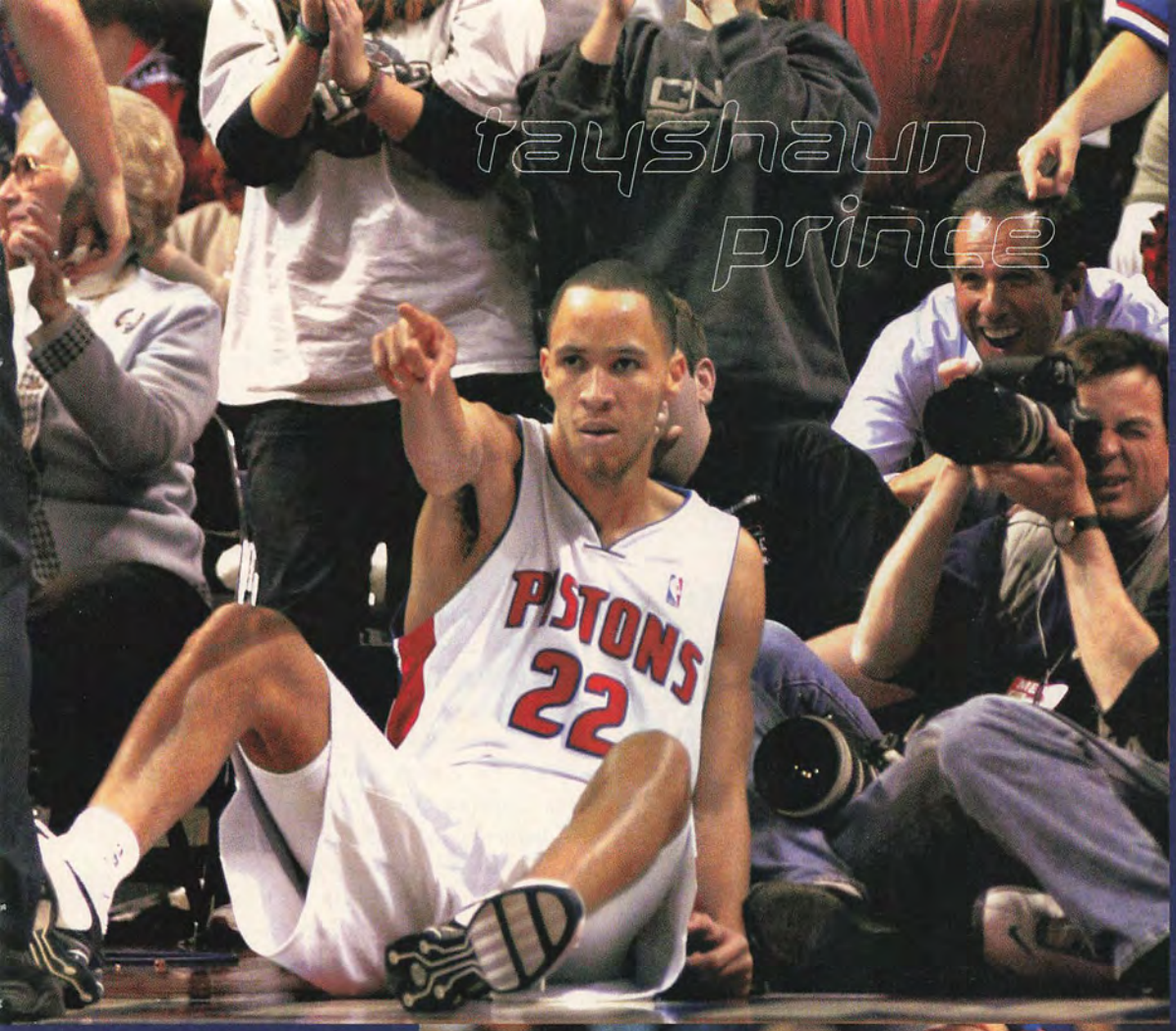
By all rights, this series should've been a 4-0 sweep if not for the last-second heroics of Kobe Bryant, who was untouchable in Game 2. Otherwise, this series was a complete mess for the Lakers from the start. Detroit came out with unmatched intensity and stole Game 1 87-75 before a packed Staples Center. The defensive dominance shown by Detroit all series long was something the Lakers looked unprepared for, even though they knew it was coming.

Game 3 saw reality set in as the Pistons invoked an 88-68 drubbing, sending the clear message that a lack of respect would not be tolerated. Magic Johnson, vice president and co-owner of the Lakers, ripped his team in public, telling reporters, "I think the Lakers had a mind-set that was disrespectful to the Pistons. They thought it was going to be easy. That is not the case."

He couldn't have been more right as the Lakers faded away with the series close. In order to stop the Lakers, Coach Brown had a simple philosophy: Let Shaq get his, and stop everyone else. And that's precisely what happened as O'Neal put up monster game after monster game, but was unable to deliver the final blow.

Kobe Bryant looked drained and bewildered at times. The Pistons were throwing a swarm of warm bodies at him, sometimes using as many as four guys per game, to stop him. Detroit kept Bryant bottled up and under siege with their aggressive play and constant personnel changes on the court.

The Lakers weren't mentally conditioned enough to take on a team with an unselfish >>



NAME:
Tayshaun Prince

AGE: 24
HEIGHT: 6-9
WEIGHT: 215 lbs.

POS: Small Forward

BORN:
February 28, 1980
Compton, CA

COLLEGE: Connecticut

DRAFTED: 2002, 1st round, 23rd pick by the Detroit Pistons

EXPERIENCE: 2 years

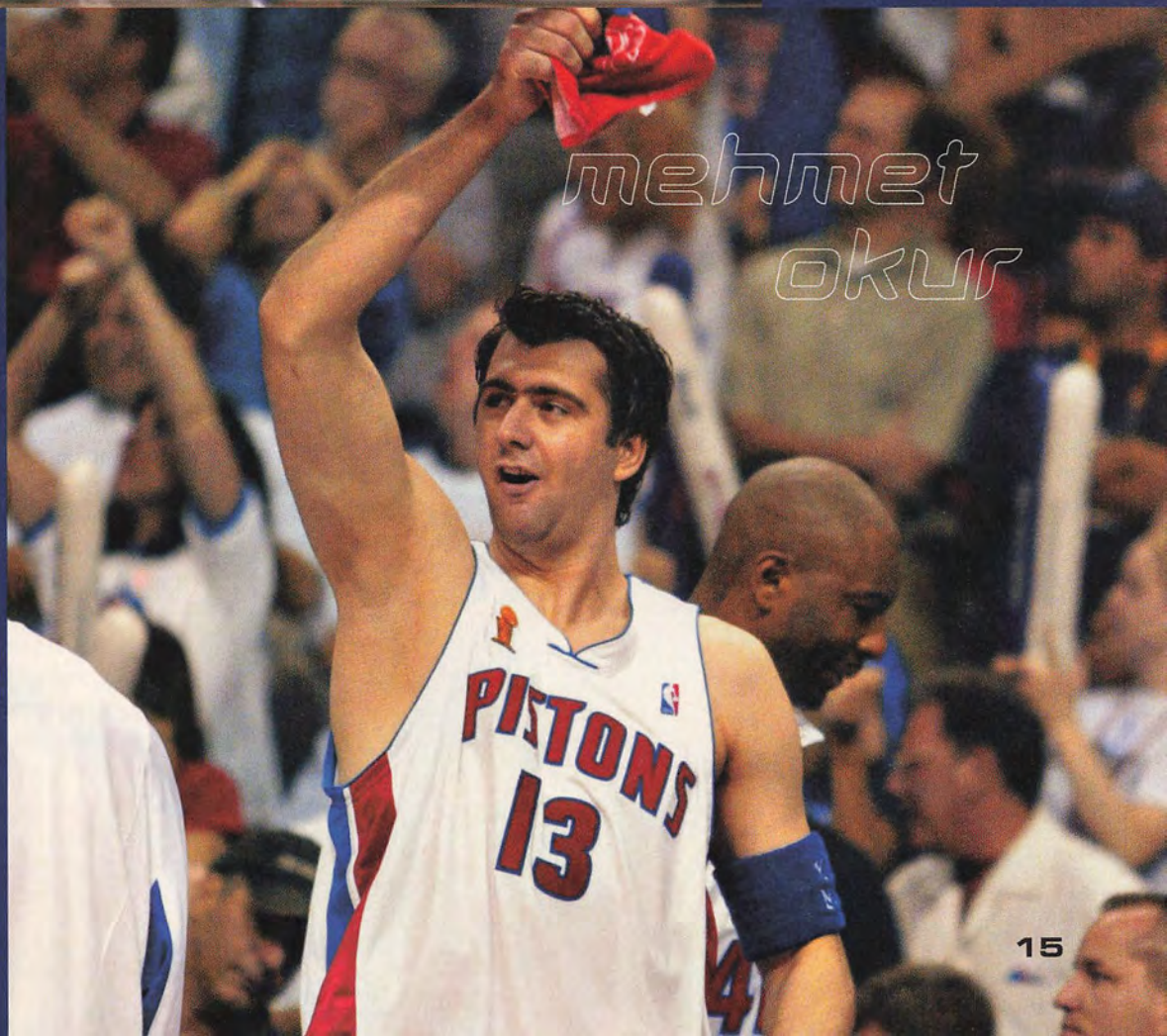
NAME:
Mehmet Okur

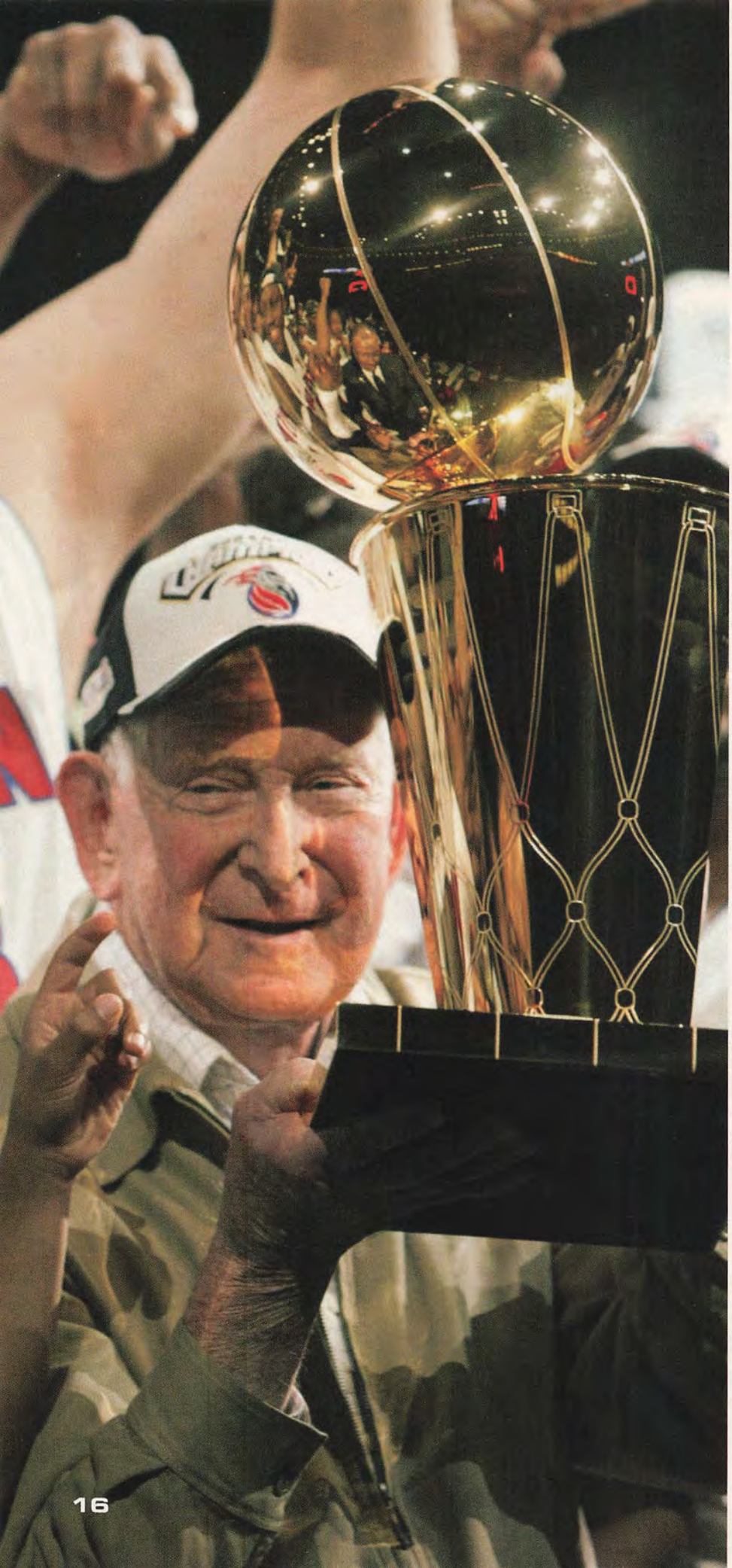
AGE: 25
HEIGHT: 6-11
WEIGHT: 249 lbs.

POS: Forward/Center

BORN:
May 26, 1979
Yalova, Turkey

EXPERIENCE: 2 years





detroit ROCKS

nature like Brown's club. And, let's face it; up and down the roster, the Pistons just had better athletes. Karl Malone was rendered useless with a bum knee, and Gary Payton was continuously outplayed and overmatched by Billups and Hamilton.

But this Finals series wasn't about what the Lakers did wrong; it was about how good the Pistons really are. They were in attack mode from the outset, and didn't look back for one second during the series.

Chauncey Billups was named Finals MVP, but most would consider this a team award for a club that always believes in "us" and not "me." Their constant barrage of aggression and pressure ultimately spelled their success as NBA champs.

So many of the events leading up to the final seconds can be considered turning points in the Detroit postseason. To wit: The Rasheed Wallace infamous guarantee of a Game 2 win against Indiana that came true. The block by Tayshaun Prince that defined hustle. All the key shots Billups hit in clutch moments. Richard Hamilton getting loose and going off for 31 in a Piston playoff win. All these moments, all these memories, will be remembered for one simple thing: a team-first belief.

The NBA Finals were supposed to a way of life for the Lakers — until they met up with Motown's finest. Los Angeles wilted under the pressure of the Pistons' defense and had no answers for the emotion and excitement of each game. GM Joe Dumars took some heat from bringing in his guy Larry Brown and passing up on Carmelo Anthony in the draft, but in the end, everyone knew the choices made were the right ones. And if you believe in playing together and getting the job done "the right way," then you'll surely see why the Detroit Pistons didn't upset anyone on their road to a championship — they just played their brand of basketball. ■

NAME:
Corliss Williamson

AGE: 30
HEIGHT: 6-7
WEIGHT: 245 lbs.

POS: Small Forward

BORN:
December 4, 1973
Russellville, AR

COLLEGE: Arkansas

DRAFTED: 1995, 1st round, 13th pick by the Sacramento Kings

EXPERIENCE: 9 years

2004 LEAGUE LEADERS
• 9th in the NBA in Field-Goal Percentage (.505)

NAME:
Elden Campbell

AGE: 35
HEIGHT: 7-0
WEIGHT: 279 lbs.

POS: Center

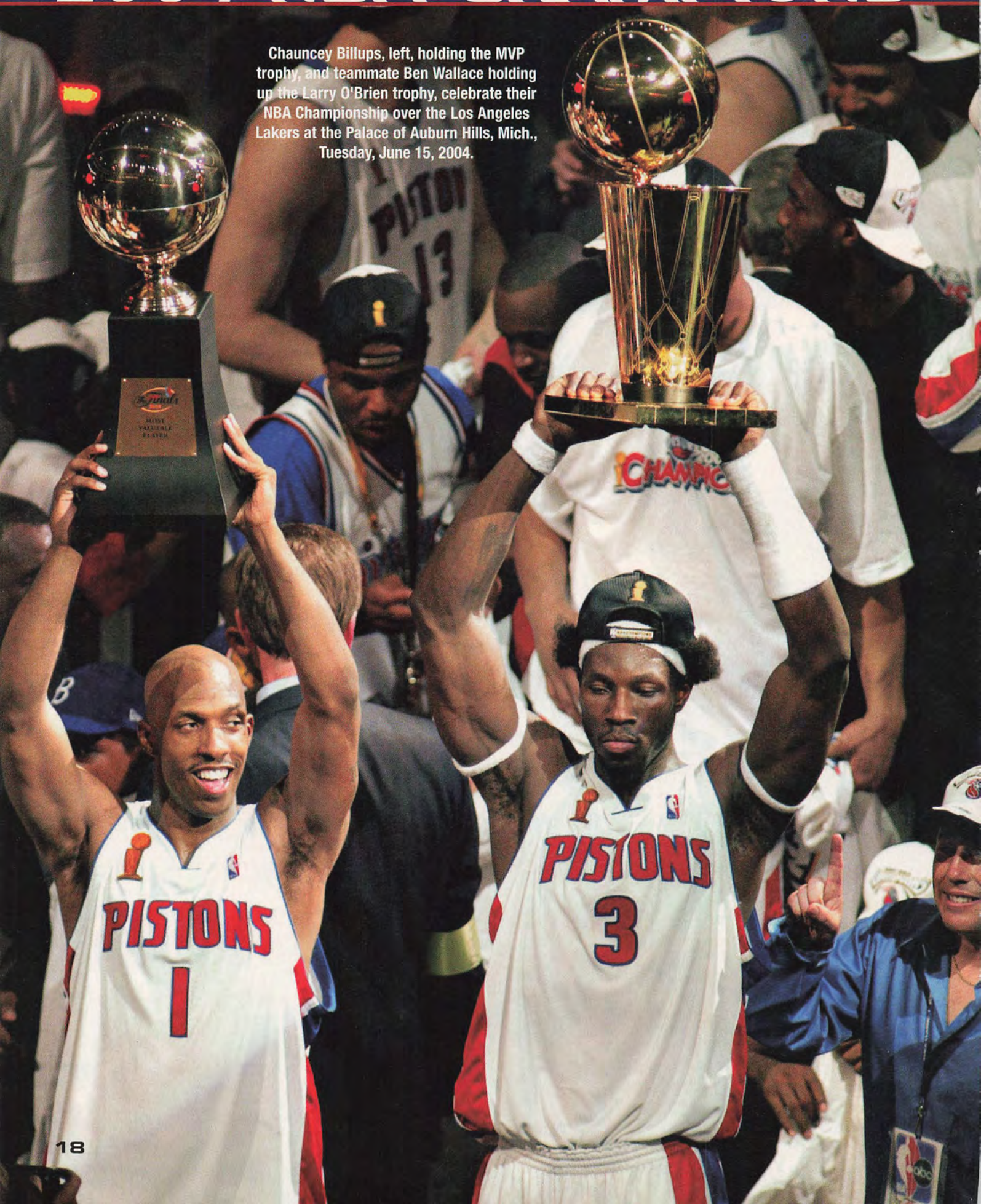
BORN:
July 23, 1968
Los Angeles, CA

COLLEGE: Clemson

DRAFTED: 1990, 1st round, 27th pick by the L.A. Lakers

EXPERIENCE: 14 years

2004 NBA CHAMPIONS



Chauncey Billups, left, holding the MVP trophy, and teammate Ben Wallace holding up the Larry O'Brien trophy, celebrate their NBA Championship over the Los Angeles Lakers at the Palace of Auburn Hills, Mich., Tuesday, June 15, 2004.

NBA Finals Game 1 (Pistons 87, Lakers 75)

The NBA Finals weren't supposed to begin this way, according to most of the world.

In Game 1, Detroit walked right into Staples Center and squashed any thought of a Lakers cakewalk with a dominating 87-75 victory in front of the Los Angeles glitterati.

Chauncey Billups torched a befuddled Gary Payton with 22 points, and the Lakers streak of 10 home playoff victories came to a screeching halt. Payton and Karl Malone tallied a combined 7 points as the Pistons pressure defense and tenacity got to L.A. for much of the game.

Shaquille O'Neal had 34 points on 13 of 16 from the floor. Kobe Bryant chipped in with 25 points, but needed 27 shots. In fact, Los Angeles was off kilter much of the night as the Pistons held them to a measly 39% for the game.

"I don't know if we could ever defend better," said Pistons coach Larry Brown, who previously ambushed the Lakers with Philadelphia during the 2001 Finals opener.

Detroit broke things open in the third period as they flipped their momentum and outscored the Lakers 24-17 on the heels of Tayshaun Prince and his awesome wingspan. Bryant was hawked all night by Prince, who hit a big 3-pointer in the third that slowly started to salt away the Lakers' expectation of a Game 1 victory.

As Brown put it, "We did an unbelievable job, and I think that's what it's going to take."

June 6, 2004

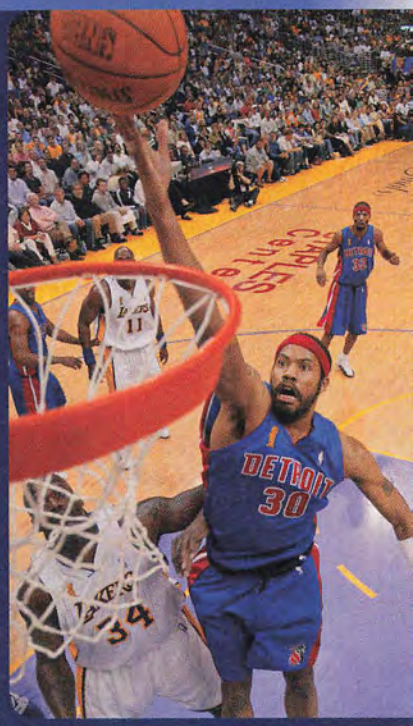
FINALS	1	2	3	4	T
Detroit	22	18	24	23	87
L.A. Lakers	19	22	17	17	75

Detroit Pistons

STARTERS	MIN	FG	3FG	FT	OREB	REB	AST	TO	STL	BLK	PF	PTS
R. Hamilton, SG	43	5-16	0-0	2-4	3	7	5	6	1	0	0	12
B. Wallace, PF	41	4-8	0-0	1-2	1	8	0	2	1	1	1	9
C. Billups, PG	39	8-14	2-4	4-4	1	3	4	2	3	0	1	22
T. Prince, SF	35	5-10	1-4	0-0	1	6	4	0	2	0	3	11
R. Wallace, SF	29	3-4	2-2	6-6	1	8	1	1	0	1	3	14
BENCH												
E. Campbell, C	18	2-5	0-0	2-6	1	1	4	1	2	2	1	6
L. Hunter, SG	13	1-5	1-2	2-2	0	1	0	1	0	0	2	5
C. Williamson, SF	11	2-3	0-0	3-4	1	2	1	0	0	0	3	7
M. Okur, C	6	0-0	0-0	1-2	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
D. Ham, SF	4	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
M. James, PG	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
D. Milicic, PF	Did Not Play											
Totals		**30-65**	**6-12**	**21-30**	**9**	**36**	**19**	**14**	**9**	**4**	**17**	**87**
		46.2%	**50.0%**	**70.0%**								

Los Angeles Lakers

STARTERS	MIN	FG	3FG	FT	OREB	REB	AST	TO	STL	BLK	PF	PTS
K. Bryant, SG	47	10-27	1-6	4-4	1	4	4	3	4	2	2	25
S. O'Neal, C	45	13-16	0-0	8-12	5	11	1	6	0	1	4	34
K. Malone, PF	44	2-9	0-0	0-0	3	11	3	0	0	1	1	4
G. Payton, PG	31	1-4	1-1	0-0	1	2	3	2	2	0	5	3
D. George, SF	27	2-5	1-2	0-0	0	3	0	1	1	0	2	5
BENCH												
D. Fisher, PG	20	1-9	0-2	0-0	3	3	3	1	1	0	2	2
K. Rush, SG	16	0-3	0-2	0-0	0	2	0	2	0	0	4	0
S. Medvedenko, PF	6	0-0	0-0	2-2	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	2
R. Fox, SF	4	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0
B. Russell, SF	Did Not Play											
L. Walton, SF	Did Not Play											
B. Cook, PF	Did Not Play											
Totals		**29-73**	**3-13**	**14-18**	**13**	**37**	**15**	**15**	**8**	**4**	**25**	**75**
		39.7%	**23.1%**	**77.8%**								



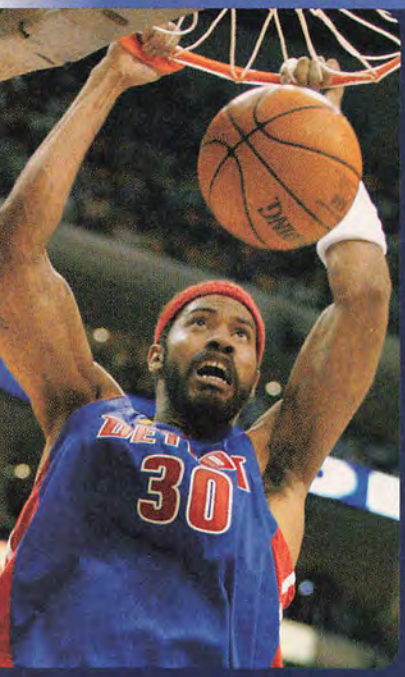
NBA Finals Game 2 (Lakers 99, Pistons 91)

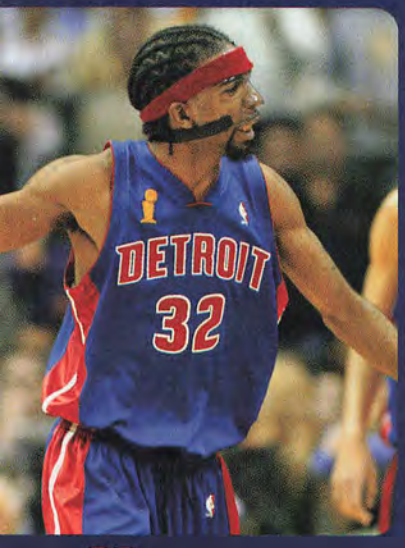
In what was billed as a must-win for the Lakers, Kobe Bryant came up huge in Game 2 as he drilled a game-tying 3-pointer with just 2.1 seconds left in the game. Then in overtime, Bryant completely dominated as he willed L.A. to a thrilling 99-91 overtime win to even things up at 1-1.

Bryant pumped in 14 of his 33 points in the fourth quarter, with none bigger than his top of the key three with Rip Hamilton draped all over him. "We always believe that Kobe can make miracle shots, even when things are not going well for him," said Lakers coach Phil Jackson.

This win was key for the Lakers as the scene shifted to Detroit in the 20th year of the 2-3-2 format. Bryant showed his ability to adjust his game plan with the 6'9" Prince guarding him. His seven assists included a dump off to Shaquille O'Neal — the move that put the stamp on the win with a minute left in the game. Luke Walton came off the bench and had 7 points with 8 assists. His surprising presence was arguably the most important factor, other than Bryant.

Chauncey Billups and Rip Hamilton led Detroit with 27 and 26 points respectively. "We're crushed," Pistons coach Larry Brown said. "I mean, shoot, we had a winnable game."





June 8, 2004

FINALS	1	2	3	4	OT	T
Detroit	16	20	30	23	2	91
L.A. Lakers	18	26	24	21	10	99

Detroit Pistons

STARTERS	MIN	FG	3FG	FT	OREB	REB	AST	TO	STL	BLK	PF	PTS
C. Billups, PG	47	6-15	2-2	13-14	2	4	9	3	0	0	1	27
R. Hamilton, SG	47	10-25	2-2	4-5	5	8	2	5	0	0	2	26
T. Prince, SF	47	2-6	1-2	0-0	4	5	0	0	3	2	2	5
B. Wallace, PF	43	5-11	0-0	2-8	4	14	1	0	2	2	5	12
R. Wallace, SF	34	5-14	0-3	1-2	1	7	3	0	0	2	4	11
BENCH												
M. Okur, C	18	0-2	0-0	1-2	0	2	1	3	0	0	2	1
L. Hunter, SG	12	2-4	1-3	0-0	0	0	2	0	1	0	1	5
E. Campbell, C	9	1-2	0-0	0-0	2	4	1	1	0	0	4	2
C. Williamson, SF	7	1-2	0-0	0-0	1	2	0	2	0	0	2	2
M. James, PG	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
D. Ham, SF	Did Not Play											
D. Milicic, PF	Did Not Play											
Totals		**32-81**	**6-12**	**21-31**	**19**	**46**	**19**	**14**	**6**	**6**	**23**	**91**
		39.5%	**50.0%**	**67.7%**								

Los Angeles Lakers

STARTERS	MIN	FG	3FG	FT	OREB	REB	AST	TO	STL	BLK	PF	PTS
K. Bryant, SG	49	14-27	1-5	4-5	0	4	7	5	2	0	5	33
S. O'Neal, C	48	10-20	0-0	9-14	3	7	3	3	0	1	5	29
K. Malone, PF	39	3-9	0-1	3-4	3	9	2	1	1	0	3	9
G. Payton, PG	28	1-3	0-1	0-0	1	3	3	3	1	0	4	2
D. George, SF	21	3-7	1-3	0-0	0	2	1	0	1	0	2	7
BENCH												
L. Walton, SF	27	3-3	1-1	0-0	1	5	8	0	0	2	3	7
D. Fisher, PG	25	2-6	2-4	1-2	0	3	2	0	2	0	4	7
K. Rush, SG	18	2-4	1-2	0-0	0	2	2	1	0	0	0	5
S. Medvedenko, PF	9	0-1	0-0	0-0	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	0
B. Cook, PF	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
R. Fox, SF	Did Not Play											
B. Russell, SF	Did Not Play											
Totals		**38-80**	**6-17**	**17-25**	**9**	**38**	**28**	**14**	**7**	**3**	**27**	**99**
		47.5%	**35.3%**	**68.0%**								

NBA Finals Game 3 (Pistons 88, Lakers 68)

When it's time to get the job done, the Pistons know it's time to go to work.

With a smothering display of defense and emotion, Detroit rocked and rolled Los Angeles to sleep with a crushing 88-68 win in Game 3, and moved even closer to a shocking NBA championship.

O'Neal was shut down by Ben Wallace and mates as he was held to just 14 points after scoring at least 25 in his previous 21 Finals games. "This is as good as we can play," said Brown, who had earlier criticized his team by saying they could improve their defensive play. It's safe to say the Pistons got the message.

Kobe Bryant, who was on in Game 2, couldn't hit water if he fell out of a boat. He was a dismal 4-13 and 0-4 from beyond the arc, with Tayshaun Prince challenging every shot.

"For the most part, he's quick. [I'm] just trying to use my length and stay in front of him," said Prince, who has an intimidating 84-inch wingspan. "The times that you let him get one step past you, that's the time that he scores."

Rip Hamilton led a solid scoring attack netting 31 points, and Billups chimed in with 19, together shoring up the offense.

The third quarter again was key for Detroit as they exploded to a 14-point lead that seemingly put the kibosh on any thoughts of a Lakers comeback. At one point, Phil Jackson pulled all of his starters except for Bryant. It made no difference — Detroit led the whole game, up by a full 20 points during the fourth quarter.

June 10, 2004

FINALS	1	2	3	4	T
L.A. Lakers	16	16	19	17	68
Detroit	24	15	24	25	88

Los Angeles Lakers

STARTERS	MIN	FG	3FG	FT	OREB	REB	AST	TO	STL	BLK	PF	PTS
K. Bryant, SG	45	4-13	0-4	3-3	0	3	5	4	1	1	3	11
S. O'Neal, C	39	7-14	0-0	0-2	2	8	1	2	1	0	5	14
G. Payton, PG	34	2-7	1-5	1-2	1	4	7	0	1	1	2	6
D. George, SF	21	3-8	2-6	0-0	0	3	0	1	2	1	3	8
K. Malone, PF	18	2-4	0-0	1-2	0	4	2	1	0	0	2	5
BENCH												
S. Medvedenko, PF	21	1-3	0-0	1-2	2	8	1	1	0	1	4	3
L. Walton, SF	19	1-5	0-2	2-2	1	4	2	2	1	0	4	4
K. Rush, SG	18	3-8	2-7	0-0	0	1	0	2	1	0	2	8
D. Fisher, PG	16	4-9	1-3	0-0	1	2	1	3	0	0	1	9
B. Cook, PF	8	0-3	0-0	0-0	0	3	0	0	0	0	2	0
B. Russell, SF	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
R. Fox, SF	Did Not Play											
Totals		**27-74**	**6-27**	**8-13**	**7**	**40**	**19**	**16**	**7**	**4**	**28**	**68**
		36.5%	**22.2%**	**61.5%**								

Detroit Pistons

STARTERS	MIN	FG	3FG	FT	OREB	REB	AST	TO	STL	BLK	PF	PTS
R. Hamilton, SG	44	11-22	2-4	7-7	3	6	3	3	2	0	1	31
B. Wallace, PF	38	3-9	0-1	1-4	2	11	3	3	2	0	3	7
C. Billups, PG	37	5-11	2-5	7-7	0	2	3	2	1	0	1	19
T. Prince, SF	35	5-13	1-5	0-2	3	6	2	1	3	0	1	11
R. Wallace, SF	27	1-4	0-0	1-4	2	10	1	1	0	2	3	3
BENCH												
L. Hunter, SG	16	1-3	0-0	0-0	1	5	2	0	0	2	4	2
C. Williamson, SF	15	2-4	0-0	2-2	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	6
E. Campbell, C	13	1-4	0-0	3-4	2	2	1	0	3	0	3	5
M. Okur, C	8	1-4	0-0	0-0	1	4	1	0	0	0	0	2
M. James, PG	3	0-0	0-0	0-0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
D. Ham, SF	2	1-1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
D. Milicic, PF	1	0-1	0-0	0-0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals		**31-76**	**5-15**	**21-30**	**15**	**51**	**17**	**11**	**11**	**4**	**16**	**88**
		40.8%	**33.3%**	**70.0%**								

NBA Finals Game 4 (Pistons 88, Lakers 80)

The Pistons inched to within one game of an improbable NBA championship with an 88-80 win in Game 4, sending the Lakers scrambling frantically for answers while on the brink of disaster.

Rasheed Wallace, hounded by foul trouble all series, busted out with 26 points and 13 rebounds as he took advantage of a limping Karl Malone. "I knew Karl was a little hobbled, so that was one of the weaknesses in their defense," said Wallace. "That's something we had to attack... He has a bad knee or whatever, so we can't have no sympathy for that."

Shaquille O'Neal returned to form with a monster game of 36 points and 20 rebounds. But it wasn't enough as the Lakers struggled to get the ball to their big man in crunch time.

Chauncey Billups continued his steady and productive play with 23 points and four assists. In a close game like this, neither team took advantage of the foul line. Detroit, who took 19 more free throws, only shot 68%, while the Lakers struggled at 50%. This was clearly the Lakers' best chance, and the frustration set in with Bryant getting slapped with a technical for arguing.

From a 56-56 deadlock at the start of the fourth quarter, Hamilton made with two jumpers to give Detroit the lead — and that's the way it stayed.

All in all, this series was more of what the Pistons were doing *right* rather than what the Lakers were doing *wrong*. "I'm very upset," said O'Neal. "We let one slip away... We had it, just in the fourth quarter, we made some mistakes."

"It was just my night," said Wallace, whose 26 points made him the team's top scorer of the game.

June 13, 2004

FINALS	1	2	3	4	T
L.A. Lakers	22	17	17	24	80
Detroit	21	20	15	32	88

Los Angeles Lakers

STARTERS	MIN	FG	3FG	FT	OREB	REB	AST	TO	STL	BLK	PF	PTS
S. O'Neal, C	47	16-21	0-0	4-11	3	20	2	2	0	1	4	36
K. Bryant, SG	45	8-25	2-6	2-2	0	0	2	3	1	0	3	20
G. Payton, PG	43	4-11	0-2	0-0	1	2	5	1	0	0	4	8
K. Malone, PF	21	1-2	0-0	0-0	2	5	2	2	0	0	2	2
D. George, SF	15	1-2	1-2	2-4	1	3	0	0	1	0	5	5
BENCH												
D. Fisher, PG	21	1-6	0-3	2-3	1	5	2	0	0	0	4	4
R. Fox, SF	16	1-4	0-1	0-0	0	1	6	0	0	0	3	2
S. Medvedenko, PF	13	1-5	0-0	1-2	1	1	1	0	0	0	3	3
L. Walton, SF	12	0-1	0-1	0-0	0	1	3	2	2	0	6	0
K. Rush, SG	6	0-1	0-1	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
B. Russell, SF	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
B. Cook, PF	Did Not Play											
Totals		**33-78 42.3%**	**3-16 18.8%**	**11-22 50.0%**	**9**	**38**	**23**	**10**	**4**	**1**	**35**	**80**

Detroit Pistons

STARTERS	MIN	FG	3FG	FT	OREB	REB	AST	TO	STL	BLK	PF	PTS
R. Hamilton, SG	44	5-11	0-0	7-7	1	2	6	5	0	0	5	17
R. Wallace, SF	41	10-23	0-5	6-6	2	13	2	2	2	2	4	26
T. Prince, SF	40	3-10	0-3	0-1	4	7	2	0	0	0	1	6
B. Wallace, PF	39	2-5	0-0	4-14	2	13	2	1	1	1	3	8
C. Billups, PG	37	7-12	2-5	7-9	0	4	4	3	2	0	3	23
BENCH												
E. Campbell, C	14	0-3	0-0	0-0	0	2	0	0	0	1	2	0
L. Hunter, SG	11	0-1	0-0	4-4	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
M. James, PG	6	2-2	0-0	0-0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	4
C. Williamson, SF	5	0-1	0-0	0-0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
D. Ham, SF	2	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
M. Okur, C	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
D. Milicic, PF	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals		**29-68 42.6%**	**2-13 15.4%**	**28-41 68.3%**	**9**	**45**	**16**	**12**	**5**	**4**	**20**	**88**

NBA Finals Game 5 (Pistons 100, Lakers 87)

Old-school-style hoops has another champion to boast. The Detroit Pistons and their unrelenting defense and unmatched intensity were just too much for the Los Angeles Lakers, and Motown can celebrate themselves as NBA champs for the first time in 14 years.

With their 100-87 Game 5 win, the Pistons solidified themselves as the best. Until the Pistons' energetic victory, no team had ever swept the middle three home games in the history of the Finals' 2-3-2 format — and no team ever lost a 3-1 lead in the Finals.

Larry Brown became the first coach to win titles both in college and as a pro. It was his style of basketball that helped Detroit to a series win that shocked the world and stunned the oddsmakers. Everyone will be asking what happened to the Lakers; and, well, the Pistons are what happened to the Lakers.

Who better to lead the way than Defensive Player of the Year Ben Wallace, who scored 18 points and ripped down 22 boards. "They do play the right way, and I'm very proud of them," Brown said. Though Wallace limited O'Neal to 20 and 8, O'Neal's 6 for 16 from the foul line helped make the Lakers' bed.

Tayshaun Prince had 17 points and 10 rips, but it was his defense that helped shut down Bryant and get the Lakers out of their rhythm.

It's safe to say this loss will shake things up in Los Angeles. Karl Malone finished the season in street clothes and Gary Payton was clearly outplayed by Hamilton and Billups, the Finals MVP.

But this night — and series — belonged to Detroit, who thoroughly destroyed the Lakers' attack in every phase of the game.

June 15, 2004

FINALS	1	2	3	4	T
L.A. Lakers	24	21	14	28	87
Detroit	25	30	27	18	100

Los Angeles Lakers

STARTERS	MIN	FG	3FG	FT	OREB	REB	AST	TO	STL	BLK	PF	PTS
K. Bryant, SG	46	7-21	0-2	10-11	1	3	4	3	1	0	2	24
S. O'Neal, C	36	7-13	0-0	6-16	2	8	1	1	1	0	4	20
G. Payton, PG	31	1-3	0-1	0-0	2	4	4	1	2	1	2	2
S. Medvedenko, PF	23	4-8	0-0	2-2	2	5	1	1	0	0	1	10
D. George, SF	20	2-6	0-2	0-0	2	3	2	0	0	1	4	4
BENCH												
D. Fisher, PG	19	3-6	3-4	1-2	0	2	1	0	2	0	5	10
K. Rush, SG	19	2-6	1-4	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	5
L. Walton, SF	19	1-4	0-2	0-0	1	3	5	3	3	0	2	2
B. Cook, PF	12	1-3	0-0	2-2	3	5	0	1	1	0	2	4
R. Fox, SF	9	3-3	0-0	0-0	0	2	0	1	0	0	1	6
B. Russell, SF	6	0-2	0-1	0-0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
K. Malone, PF	Did Not Play											
Totals		**31-75 41.3%**	**4-16 25.0%**	**21-33 63.6%**	**14**	**36**	**18**	**11**	**10**	**2**	**27**	**87**

Detroit Pistons

STARTERS	MIN	FG	3FG	FT	OREB	REB	AST	TO	STL	BLK	PF	PTS
R. Hamilton, SG	45	6-18	0-4	9-11	0	3	4	4	1	0	1	21
B. Wallace, PF	42	8-13	0-1	2-6	10	22	1	0	3	1	3	18
T. Prince, SF	38	6-15	0-2	5-8	3	10	2	1	1	0	2	17
C. Billups, PG	33	3-5	0-1	8-8	0	3	6	3	0	0	2	14
R. Wallace, SF	21	5-8	1-2	0-0	1	1	0	0	0	1	5	11
BENCH												
E. Campbell, C	15	2-2	0-0	0-0	1	4	2	1	0	0	3	4
C. Williamson, SF	14	1-5	0-0	4-4	2	3	0	1	0	0	2	6
L. Hunter, SG	13	1-4	0-3	0-0	0	1	0	0	2	0	3	2
M. James, PG	9	0-2	0-0	0-0	1	1	3	0	0	0	2	0
M. Okur, C	7	3-3	1-1	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	7
D. Milicic, PF	2	0-1	0-0	0-2	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
D. Ham, SF	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Totals		**35-76 46.1%**	**2-14 14.3%**	**28-39 71.8%**	**20**	**50**	**18**	**12**	**8**	**2**	**27**	**100**

EASTERN CONFERENCE FINALS

Detroit Pistons forward Darvin Ham (8) reaches in for a block on Indiana Pacers forward Jermaine O'Neal during the second quarter of Game 3 of the NBA Eastern Conference finals at the Palace in Auburn Hills, Mich., Wednesday, May 26, 2004.

Indiana vs. Detroit

Game	Date	Site	Time/Result
1	Sat. May 22	@ IND	PACERS 78, PISTONS 74
2	Mon. May 24	@ IND	PISTONS 72, PACERS 67
3	Wed. May 26	@ DET	PISTONS 85, PACERS 78
4	Fri. May 28	@ DET	PACERS 83, PISTONS 68
5	Sun. May 30	@ IND	PISTONS 83, PACERS 65
6	Tue. June 1	@ DET	PISTONS 69, PACERS 65

PISTONS win 4-2!

GAME 1

FINALS	1	2	3	4	T
Detroit	26	15	17	16	74
Indiana	22	26	13	17	78

Pistons

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
R. Hamilton, SG	23	3	3	2
C. Billups, PG	18	0	4	1
B. Wallace, PF	11	22	5	5
T. Prince, SF	9	6	3	2
R. Wallace, SF	4	7	1	5
Bench				
C. Williamson, SF	5	5	1	3
E. Campbell, C	2	1	1	1
M. Okur, C	2	3	1	0
D. Ham, SF	0	0	0	0
L. Hunter, SG	0	0	0	0
M. James, PG	0	0	2	2
D. Milicic, PF	0	0	0	0

Pacers

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
J. O'Neal, PF	21	14	1	1
R. Artest, SF	17	7	1	1
J. Tinsley, PG	13	1	5	4
R. Miller, SG	6	3	4	1
J. Foster, C	2	8	0	2
Bench				
A. Harrington, SF	14	8	0	3
J. Bender, SF	5	0	1	3
K. Anderson, PG	0	0	0	0
A. Croshere, PF	0	0	0	0
A. Johnson, PG	0	0	2	2
S. Pollard, C	0	0	0	0
F. Jones, SG	0	0	0	2

GAME 2

FINALS	1	2	3	4	T
Detroit	12	25	18	17	72
Indiana	17	26	11	13	67

Pistons

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
R. Hamilton, SG	23	8	3	5
R. Wallace, SF	10	8	1	4
C. Billups, PG	6	5	6	3
B. Wallace, PF	5	8	1	2
T. Prince, SF	5	5	1	3
Bench				
C. Williamson, SF	9	1	2	2
M. Okur, C	9	4	0	2
M. James, PG	3	2	1	1
E. Campbell, C	2	1	0	3
D. Ham, SF	0	0	0	0
L. Hunter, SG	0	0	0	1
D. Milicic, PF	0	0	0	0

Pacers

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
R. Miller, SG	21	6	1	2
J. O'Neal, PF	16	8	0	3
R. Artest, SF	13	7	0	6
J. Tinsley, PG	4	3	1	6
J. Foster, C	2	9	1	3
Bench				
A. Johnson, PG	6	3	4	4
A. Croshere, PF	2	5	0	0
J. Bender, SF	3	2	1	2
A. Harrington, SF	0	7	0	3
K. Anderson, PG	0	0	0	0
S. Pollard, C	0	0	0	0
F. Jones, SG	0	1	0	1

GAME 3

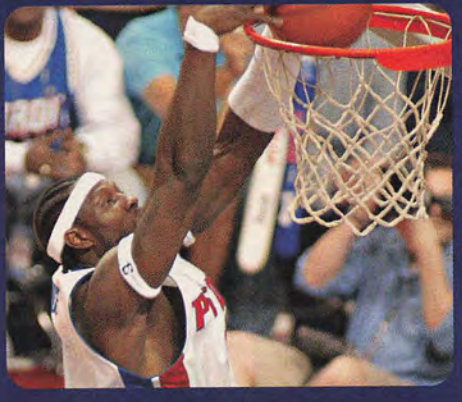
FINALS	1	2	3	4	T
Indiana	14	16	15	33	78
Detroit	27	9	20	29	85

Pacers

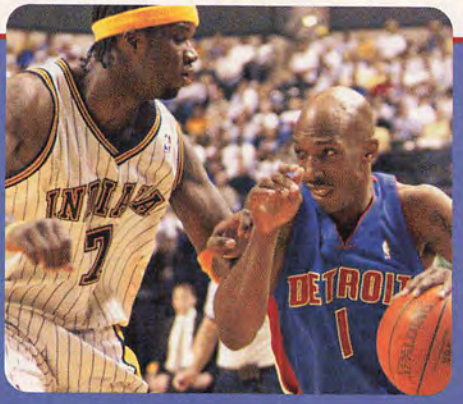
Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
J. O'Neal, PF	24	9	2	3
R. Artest, SF	13	5	1	5
J. Tinsley, PG	12	1	4	6
R. Miller, SG	3	2	1	2
J. Foster, C	0	5	0	1
Bench				
A. Harrington, SF	13	3	1	4
A. Croshere, PF	6	7	2	6
J. Bender, SF	3	0	0	2
F. Jones, SG	2	2	0	2
A. Johnson, PG	2	3	1	0
K. Anderson, PG	0	0	0	0
S. Pollard, C	0	0	0	0

Pistons

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
R. Hamilton, SG	20	4	5	2
R. Wallace, SF	20	4	3	5
B. Wallace, PF	17	16	0	3
C. Billups, PG	14	5	8	2
T. Prince, SF	5	4	0	2
Bench				
C. Williamson, SF	5	2	2	5
D. Ham, SF	2	1	0	2
M. James, PG	2	1	1	3
E. Campbell, C	0	0	0	0
L. Hunter, SG	0	1	0	0
M. Okur, C	0	0	0	1
D. Milicic, PF	0	0	0	0



EASTERN CONFERENCE FINALS



GAME 4

FINALS	1	2	3	4	T
Indiana	29	20	21	13	83
Detroit	17	22	11	18	68

Pacers

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
R. Artest, SF	20	10	4	2
R. Miller, SG	15	1	3	2
A. Croshere, PF	14	3	1	1
J. O'Neal, PF	12	13	0	5
J. Tinsley, PG	4	2	5	3
Bench				
A. Harrington, SF	8	4	0	4
A. Johnson, PG	6	4	2	4
J. Bender, SF	4	1	0	0
K. Anderson, PG	0	0	0	1
S. Pollard, C	0	0	0	0
F. Jones, SG	0	2	0	4
J. Foster, C	0	1	0	1

Pistons

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
R. Hamilton, SG	22	4	4	3
C. Billups, PG	21	2	5	3
R. Wallace, SF	10	10	0	2
B. Wallace, PF	1	19	0	3
T. Prince, SF	0	5	4	1
Bench				
E. Campbell, C	4	0	0	1
M. James, PG	3	2	0	2
C. Williamson, SF	7	3	0	4
D. Ham, SF	0	0	0	0
M. Okur, C	0	2	0	0
L. Hunter, SG	0	2	0	2
D. Milicic, PF	0	0	0	0

GAME 5

FINALS	1	2	3	4	T
Detroit	25	16	21	21	83
Indiana	17	19	17	12	65

Pistons

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
R. Hamilton, SG	33	3	3	0
R. Wallace, SF	22	8	2	3
T. Prince, SF	9	4	2	3
C. Billups, PG	7	4	7	2
B. Wallace, PF	1	12	3	1
Bench				
C. Williamson, SF	5	3	0	3
D. Ham, SF	2	4	0	2
L. Hunter, SG	2	3	0	4
M. Okur, C	2	1	0	1
M. James, PG	0	1	1	0
E. Campbell, C	0	3	0	3
D. Milicic, PF	0	0	0	0

Pacers

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
R. Artest, SF	13	11	3	3
J. O'Neal, PF	11	6	1	5
J. Tinsley, PG	8	3	5	3
R. Miller, SG	5	4	3	2
A. Croshere, PF	2	5	2	1
Bench				
F. Jones, SG	13	3	0	2
A. Harrington, SF	9	5	1	2
A. Johnson, PG	4	3	4	2
J. Foster, C	0	2	0	0
K. Anderson, PG	0	0	0	0
S. Pollard, C	0	0	0	0
J. Bender, SF	0	0	0	0

GAME 6

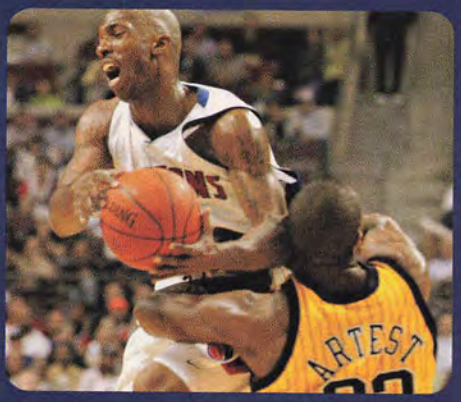
FINALS	1	2	3	4	T
Indiana	23	10	17	15	65
Detroit	11	16	19	23	69

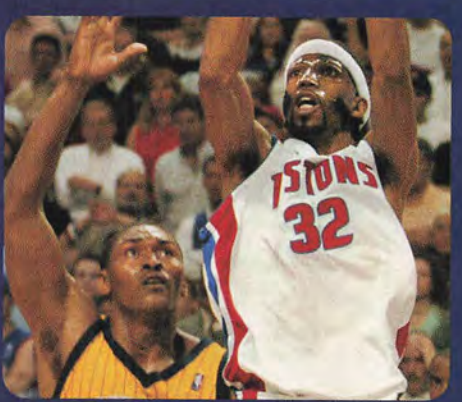
Pacers

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
J. O'Neal, PF	20	10	1	1
A. Croshere, PF	12	7	0	2
R. Artest, SF	11	10	5	3
R. Miller, SG	6	3	2	2
A. Harrington, SF	4	4	0	4
Bench				
A. Johnson, PG	9	3	7	1
F. Jones, SG	2	2	1	3
J. Bender, SF	1	1	0	2
K. Anderson, PG	0	0	0	1
S. Pollard, C	0	0	0	0
J. Foster, C	0	0	0	0
J. Tinsley, PG	0	1	1	1

Pistons

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
R. Hamilton, SG	21	5	5	5
B. Wallace, PF	12	16	0	0
R. Wallace, SF	11	11	2	3
C. Billups, PG	10	4	4	2
T. Prince, SF	7	6	2	5
Bench				
C. Williamson, SF	6	4	2	2
L. Hunter, SG	2	0	2	0
E. Campbell, C	0	0	0	0
D. Ham, SF	0	1	0	0
M. Okur, C	0	1	0	1
M. James, PG	0	0	0	0
D. Milicic, PF	0	0	0	0





Detroit Pistons' Richard Hamilton (32) dunks over Indiana Pacers' Ron Artest during the second quarter in Game 3 of the NBA Eastern Conference finals in Auburn Hills, Mich., Wednesday, May 26, 2004. The Pistons beat the Pacers 85-78 to take a 2-1 lead in the best-of-seven series.

EASTERN CONFERENCE SEMI-FINALS

New Jersey vs. Detroit

Game	Date	Site	Time/Result
1	Mon. May 3	@ DET	DET 78, NJ 56
2	Fri. May 7	@ DET	DET 95, NJ 80
3	Sun. May 9	@ NJ	NJ 82, DET 64
4	Tue. May 11	@ NJ	NJ 94, DET 79
5	Fri. May 14	@ DET	NJ 127, DET 120
6	Sun. May 16	@ NJ	DET 81, NJ 75
7	Thu. May 20	@ DET	DET 90, NJ 69

PISTONS win 4-3!

GAME 1

FINALS	1	2	3	4	T
New Jersey	14	11	14	17	56
Detroit	18	19	20	21	78

Nets

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
K. Kittles, SG	15	1	2	4
K. Martin, PF	11	5	0	5
J. Kidd, PG	9	7	6	0
R. Jefferson, SF	8	3	1	5
J. Collins, C	0	2	0	5
Bench				
R. Rogers, SF	1	6	1	2
A. Williams, PF	0	1	1	1
L. Harris, SG	9	2	0	1
T. Slay, SG	2	0	0	0
Z. Planinic, PG	1	1	0	0
B. Armstrong, SG	0	0	0	0
B. Scalabrine, PF	0	1	1	0

Pistons

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
R. Hamilton, SG	15	6	7	2
T. Prince, SF	15	10	5	2
B. Wallace, PF	13	11	3	1
R. Wallace, SF	8	3	0	3
C. Billups, PG	6	2	2	4
Bench				
L. Hunter, SG	3	3	1	2
C. Williamson, SF	3	1	1	2
M. James, PG	3	2	1	0
D. Ham, SF	2	0	0	0
D. Milicic, PF	0	0	0	1
M. Okur, C	6	6	1	1
E. Campbell, C	4	4	0	4

GAME 2

FINALS	1	2	3	4	T
New Jersey	19	27	11	23	80
Detroit	18	16	27	34	95

Nets

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
R. Jefferson, SF	19	6	3	3
K. Martin, PF	19	8	0	6
J. Kidd, PG	8	7	11	2
J. Collins, C	8	10	1	4
K. Kittles, SG	6	3	1	2
Bench				
R. Rogers, SF	11	5	1	3
A. Williams, PF	5	2	0	3
L. Harris, SG	4	1	1	2
B. Armstrong, SG	0	0	0	0
B. Scalabrine, PF	0	0	0	0
T. Slay, SG	0	0	0	0
Z. Planinic, PG	0	0	0	0

Pistons

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
C. Billups, PG	28	4	13	5
R. Hamilton, SG	28	4	5	3
R. Wallace, SF	15	6	1	3
B. Wallace, PF	8	11	0	2
T. Prince, SF	2	8	1	2
Bench				
C. Williamson, SF	11	1	0	2
M. Okur, C	2	2	0	0
L. Hunter, SG	1	3	1	3
E. Campbell, C	0	1	0	1
D. Ham, SF	0	0	0	1
M. James, PG	0	0	0	0
D. Milicic, PF	0	0	0	0

GAME 3

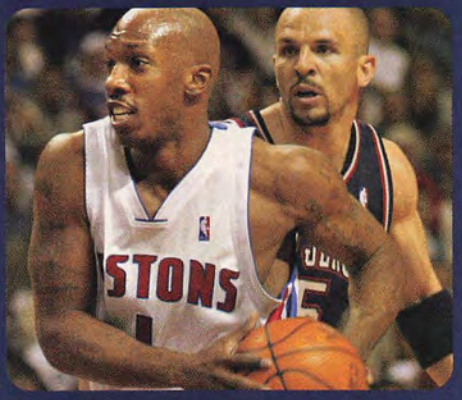
FINALS	1	2	3	4	T
Detroit	13	25	14	12	64
New Jersey	31	16	19	16	82

Pistons

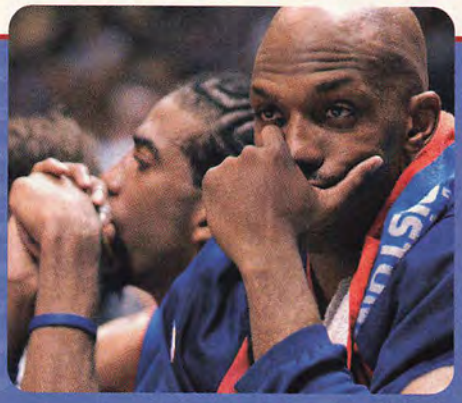
Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
B. Wallace, PF	15	24	4	4
R. Hamilton, SG	15	5	0	4
R. Wallace, SF	10	2	0	5
C. Billups, PG	2	4	2	2
T. Prince, SF	4	0	1	3
Bench				
M. James, PG	6	3	1	1
D. Ham, SF	4	2	1	2
C. Williamson, SF	7	0	1	1
E. Campbell, C	1	0	0	1
L. Hunter, SG	0	0	0	1
M. Okur, C	0	5	0	1
D. Milicic, PF	0	0	0	0

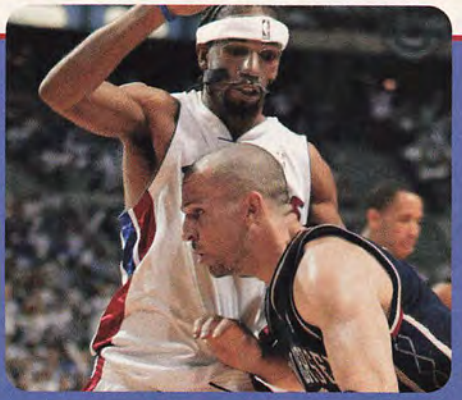
Nets

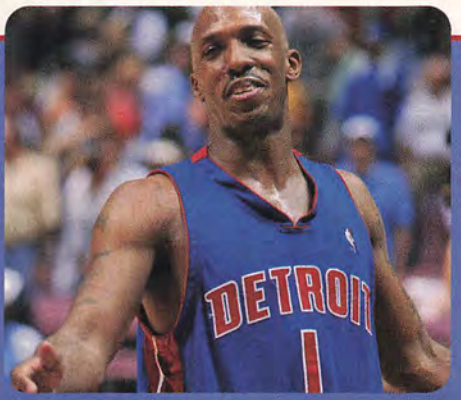
Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
K. Martin, PF	13	9	0	5
J. Kidd, PG	5	7	12	2
R. Jefferson, SF	30	8	5	4
K. Kittles, SG	17	5	2	2
J. Collins, C	2	6	1	4
Bench				
Z. Planinic, PG	0	0	1	0
B. Armstrong, SG	2	0	0	0
B. Scalabrine, PF	6	3	0	4
R. Rogers, SF	4	4	1	4
A. Williams, PF	2	6	0	3
L. Harris, SG	1	0	0	2
T. Slay, SG	0	0	0	0



EASTERN CONFERENCE SEMI-FINALS







GAME 4

FINALS	1	2	3	4	T
Detroit	18	22	16	23	79
New Jersey	21	26	30	17	94

Pistons

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
R. Hamilton, SG	30	6	2	5
C. Billups, PG	6	0	5	3
B. Wallace, PF	6	15	2	2
R. Wallace, SF	6	6	0	2
T. Prince, SF	8	2	2	2
Bench				
M. James, PG	6	2	4	2
D. Ham, SF	2	1	0	1
L. Hunter, SG	2	0	0	2
D. Milicic, PF	0	0	1	0
M. Okur, C	8	0	0	2
C. Williamson, SF	5	1	0	5
E. Campbell, C	0	0	0	0

Nets

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
J. Kidd, PG	22	10	11	2
R. Jefferson, SF	19	7	2	0
K. Martin, PF	16	15	1	6
K. Kittles, SG	14	2	5	5
J. Collins, C	2	3	2	5
Bench				
L. Harris, SG	11	3	1	1
A. Williams, PF	2	1	0	5
R. Rogers, SF	8	6	1	5
B. Armstrong, SG	0	0	0	2
B. Scalabrine, PF	0	2	0	2
T. Slay, SG	0	0	0	0
Z. Planinic, PG	0	0	1	0

GAME 5

FINALS	1	2	3	4	1OT	2OT	3OT	T
New Jersey	25	18	20	25	11	12	16	127
Detroit	19	25	18	26	11	12	9	120

Nets

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
R. Jefferson, SF	31	11	4	5
K. Martin, PF	22	9	2	6
K. Kittles, SG	20	11	5	4
J. Kidd, PG	16	6	8	1
J. Collins, C	4	3	3	6
Bench				
B. Scalabrine, PF	17	3	0	5
L. Harris, SG	12	4	0	3
R. Rogers, SF	4	7	1	6
A. Williams, PF	1	1	1	6
B. Armstrong, SG	0	0	0	0
T. Slay, SG	0	0	0	0
Z. Planinic, PG	0	0	0	0

Pistons

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
C. Billups, PG	31	10	8	4
R. Wallace, SF	18	10	3	6
T. Prince, SF	18	8	2	6
B. Wallace, PF	16	11	2	6
R. Hamilton, SG	11	3	11	6
Bench				
C. Williamson, SF	14	3	0	2
M. James, PG	10	2	1	4
D. Ham, SF	0	2	0	2
L. Hunter, SG	0	0	1	4
M. Okur, C	2	4	0	1
E. Campbell, C	0	0	0	0
D. Milicic, PF	0	0	0	0

GAME 6

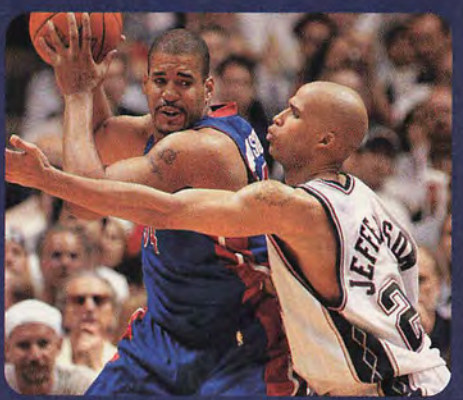
FINALS	1	2	3	4	T
Detroit	23	27	10	21	81
New Jersey	25	11	21	18	75

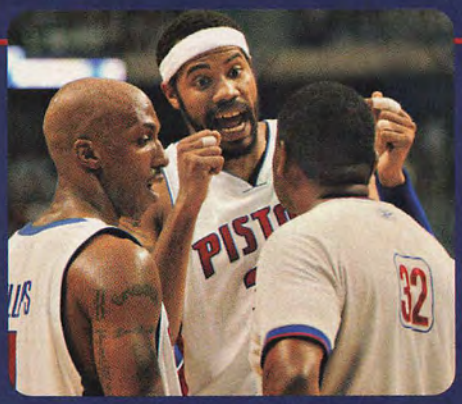
Pistons

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
R. Hamilton, SG	24	5	4	3
R. Wallace, SF	14	5	2	2
C. Billups, PG	11	3	3	4
T. Prince, SF	6	1	0	5
B. Wallace, PF	6	20	3	2
Bench				
L. Hunter, SG	8	1	0	3
M. Okur, C	5	6	0	1
M. James, PG	5	3	3	0
C. Williamson, SF	2	2	1	3
E. Campbell, C	0	0	0	0
D. Ham, SF	0	0	0	0
D. Milicic, PF	0	0	0	0

Nets

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
R. Jefferson, SF	23	7	5	3
K. Martin, PF	19	7	1	3
K. Kittles, SG	11	3	3	3
J. Kidd, PG	11	5	8	2
J. Collins, C	3	5	1	5
Bench				
A. Williams, PF	4	1	0	1
L. Harris, SG	2	1	1	1
R. Rogers, SF	2	2	0	3
B. Armstrong, SG	0	0	0	0
B. Scalabrine, PF	0	0	0	2
T. Slay, SG	0	0	0	0
Z. Planinic, PG	0	0	0	0





GAME 7

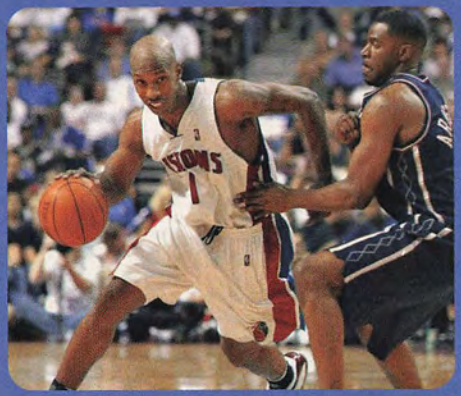
FINALS	1	2	3	4	T
New Jersey	14	17	19	19	69
Detroit	21	22	30	17	90

Nets

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
K. Kittles, SG	18	1	1	2
K. Martin, PF	17	12	1	2
R. Jefferson, SF	17	7	3	3
J. Collins, C	2	5	2	3
J. Kidd, PG	0	5	7	1
Bench				
R. Rogers, SF	13	7	2	2
B. Armstrong, SG	0	0	1	1
B. Scalabrine, PF	0	2	0	2
T. Slay, SG	0	0	0	0
A. Williams, PF	2	0	0	3
L. Harris, SG	0	2	0	1
Z. Planinic, PG	0	0	0	0

Pistons

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
C. Billups, PG	22	2	7	2
R. Hamilton, SG	21	6	4	2
B. Wallace, PF	18	8	2	3
R. Wallace, SF	12	7	2	5
T. Prince, SF	3	6	5	2
Bench				
M. Okur, C	4	7	0	1
C. Williamson, SF	8	3	3	4
E. Campbell, C	0	0	0	0
D. Ham, SF	0	0	0	0
M. James, PG	2	1	0	1
L. Hunter, SG	0	1	0	0
D. Milicic, PF	0	1	0	0



A Detroit Pistons fan sporting an oversized afro wig watches game action between the Pistons and the Los Angeles Lakers during the second quarter of game 5 of the NBA Finals at the Palace of Auburn Hills, Mich., Tuesday, June 15, 2004.

CHEVROLET
CHEVROLET
CHEVROLET
CHEVROLET

EASTERN CONFERENCE QUARTER-FINALS

Milwaukee vs. Detroit

Game	Date	Site	Time/Result
1	Sun. April 18	@ DET	DET 108, MIL 82
2	Wed. April 21	@ DET	MIL 92, DET 88
3	Sat. April 24	@ MIL	DET 95, MIL 85
4	Mon. April 26	@ MIL	DET 109, MIL 92
5	Thu. April 29	@ DET	DET 91, MIL 77

PISTONS win 4-1!

GAME 1

FINALS	1	2	3	4	T
Milwaukee	21	22	15	24	82
Detroit	27	25	28	28	108

Bucks

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
D. Mason, SG	16	2	0	4
M. Redd, SG	11	3	2	2
D. Jones, PG	7	3	7	3
J. Smith, PF	6	10	0	2
B. Skinner, C	6	3	0	2
Bench				
E. Strickland, PG	10	4	3	2
K. Van Horn, SF	8	5	3	2
T. Kukoc, SF	8	2	0	2
B. Knight, PG	4	1	3	6
D. Gadzuric, C	4	1	2	1
M. Haislip, PF	2	1	0	0
D. Santiago, C	0	0	0	1

Pistons

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
R. Hamilton, SG	21	3	8	3
B. Wallace, PF	17	14	0	1
R. Wallace, SF	17	10	2	3
T. Prince, SF	14	11	1	2
C. Billups, PG	12	2	6	3
Bench				
C. Williamson, SF	12	5	1	3
M. Okur, C	8	1	1	1
L. Hunter, SG	3	4	1	2
M. James, PG	3	0	2	0
D. Milicic, PF	1	0	0	0
E. Campbell, C	0	2	1	1
D. Ham, SF	0	0	0	0

GAME 2

FINALS	1	2	3	4	T
Milwaukee	25	23	22	22	92
Detroit	25	16	19	28	88

Bucks

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
M. Redd, SG	26	4	0	5
D. Mason, SG	15	4	5	4
J. Smith, PF	11	13	0	1
D. Jones, PG	7	6	7	3
B. Skinner, C	5	4	0	2
Bench				
T. Kukoc, SF	15	9	0	3
B. Knight, PG	11	7	5	2
K. Van Horn, SF	2	1	1	2
E. Strickland, PG	0	0	1	1
D. Santiago, C	0	0	0	0
D. Gadzuric, C	0	0	0	0
M. Haislip, PF	0	0	0	0

Pistons

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
C. Billups, PG	20	1	8	6
R. Hamilton, SG	18	4	2	6
R. Wallace, SF	16	12	5	0
T. Prince, SF	16	6	2	3
B. Wallace, PF	7	11	3	2
Bench				
L. Hunter, SG	7	0	5	3
M. James, PG	4	0	0	2
E. Campbell, C	0	0	0	0
D. Ham, SF	0	0	0	1
C. Williamson, SF	0	2	0	3
M. Okur, C	0	1	0	0
D. Milicic, PF	0	0	0	0

GAME 3

FINALS	1	2	3	4	T
Detroit	22	20	32	21	95
Milwaukee	30	19	19	17	85

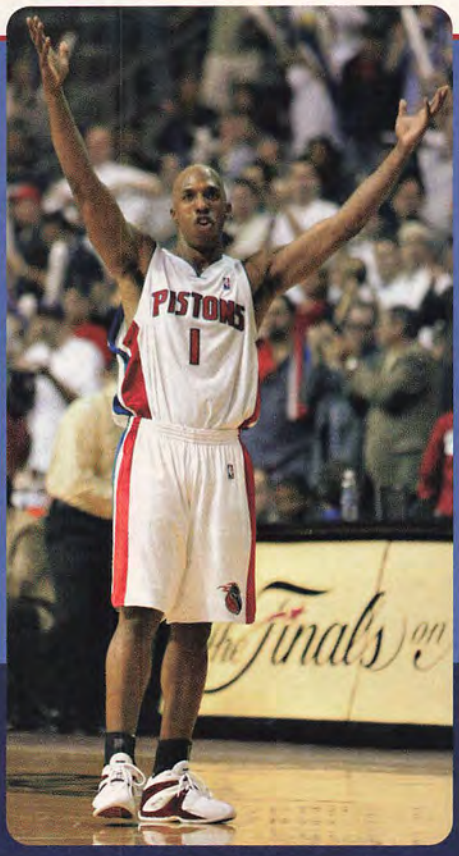
Pistons

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
C. Billups, PG	21	2	7	1
R. Hamilton, SG	17	4	1	4
T. Prince, SF	16	8	1	3
B. Wallace, PF	13	21	1	2
R. Wallace, SF	10	11	3	5
Bench				
M. Okur, C	7	4	0	0
L. Hunter, SG	6	1	0	2
M. James, PG	3	0	1	0
C. Williamson, SF	2	1	0	5
E. Campbell, C	0	0	0	0
D. Ham, SF	0	0	0	2
D. Milicic, PF	0	0	0	0

Bucks

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
D. Mason, SG	19	9	3	3
M. Redd, SG	19	6	5	5
J. Smith, PF	16	6	0	4
D. Jones, PG	14	6	7	4
B. Skinner, C	4	5	0	4
Bench				
K. Van Horn, SF	8	2	1	4
B. Knight, PG	3	1	3	3
T. Kukoc, SF	2	1	3	1
E. Strickland, PG	0	0	0	0
D. Santiago, C	0	0	0	0
D. Gadzuric, C	0	0	0	0
M. Haislip, PF	0	0	0	0

EASTERN CONFERENCE QUARTER-FINALS



GAME 4

FINALS	1	2	3	4	T
Detroit	28	24	22	35	109
Milwaukee	27	22	19	24	92

Pistons

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
R. Hamilton, SG	27	2	6	4
R. Wallace, SF	20	9	3	2
C. Billups, PG	19	3	9	1
T. Prince, SF	17	4	3	4
B. Wallace, PF	7	9	5	0
Bench				
M. Okur, C	8	2	0	0
L. Hunter, SG	4	3	4	0
C. Williamson, SF	4	0	0	3
M. James, PG	3	0	1	2
E. Campbell, C	0	0	0	0
D. Ham, SF	0	1	0	2
D. Milicic, PF	0	0	0	0

Bucks

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
D. Jones, PG	17	4	10	1
J. Smith, PF	17	12	0	3
M. Redd, SG	12	5	2	2
K. Van Horn, SF	11	3	1	2
D. Mason, SG	8	5	2	4
Bench				
T. Kukoc, SF	15	0	1	1
B. Skinner, C	8	6	0	0
E. Strickland, PG	4	1	5	0
B. Knight, PG	0	2	2	1
D. Santiago, C	0	0	0	0
D. Gadzuric, C	0	0	0	0
M. Haislip, PF	0	0	0	0

GAME 5

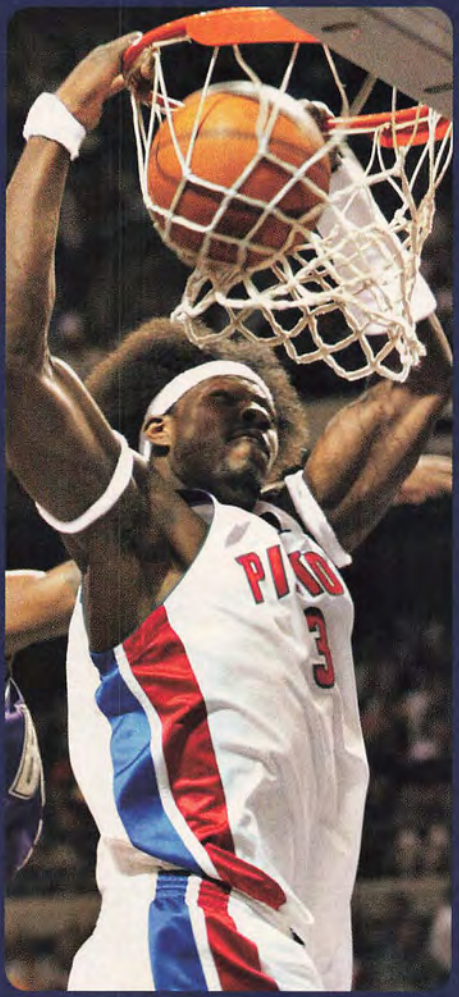
FINALS	1	2	3	4	T
Milwaukee	22	10	22	23	77
Detroit	24	15	30	22	91

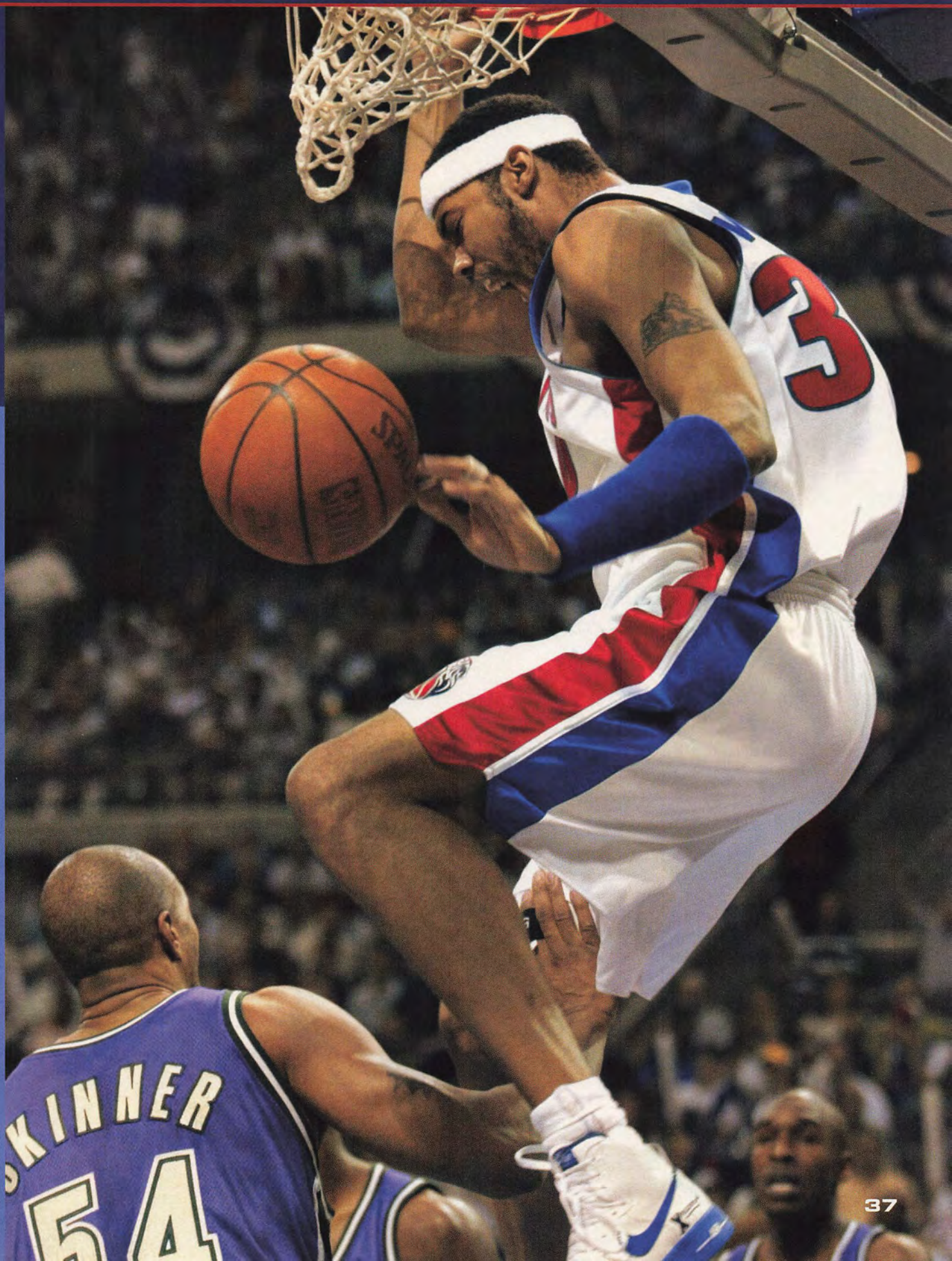
Bucks

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
M. Redd, SG	22	6	4	2
J. Smith, PF	16	8	2	5
D. Mason, SG	14	3	2	1
K. Van Horn, SF	11	12	1	5
D. Jones, PG	5	1	6	3
Bench				
B. Skinner, C	4	4	0	0
B. Knight, PG	3	0	4	0
T. Kukoc, SF	2	2	0	4
E. Strickland, PG	0	0	0	0
D. Santiago, C	0	0	0	0
D. Gadzuric, C	0	0	0	0
M. Haislip, PF	0	0	0	0

Pistons

Starters	PTS	REB	AST	PF
T. Prince, SF	24	9	8	2
C. Billups, PG	19	1	6	1
R. Hamilton, SG	18	5	4	4
R. Wallace, SF	11	11	0	1
B. Wallace, PF	9	12	3	4
Bench				
M. Okur, C	8	6	3	0
D. Ham, SF	2	1	0	1
M. James, PG	0	3	1	1
D. Milicic, PF	0	0	0	0
E. Campbell, C	0	0	0	0
L. Hunter, SG	0	4	2	2
C. Williamson, SF	0	0	0	0



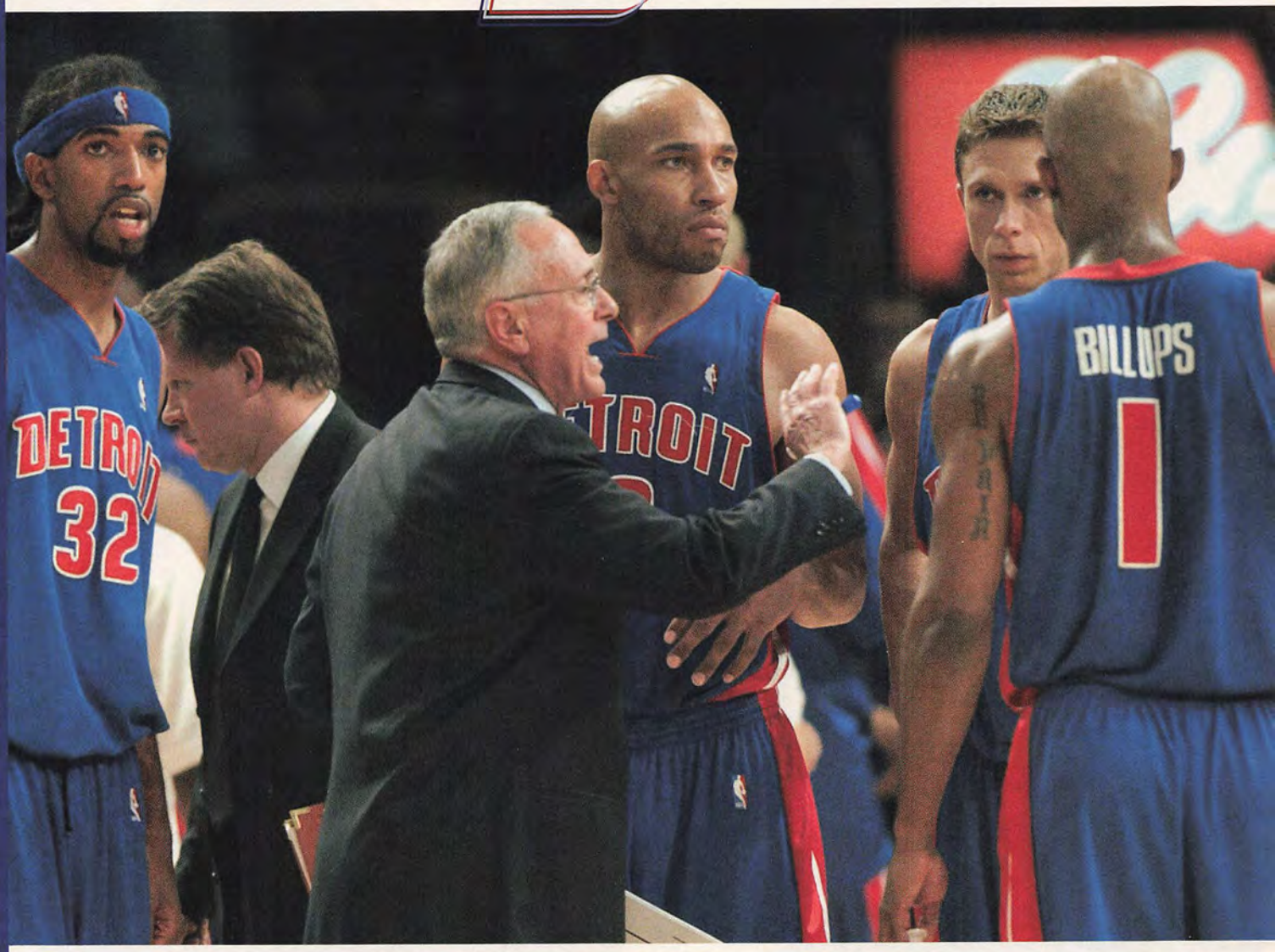

3
KINNER
54

It's all about the D

A year to remember as a fan, and a year that opposing offenses want to forget.

As the 2003-04 NBA season began, most forecasted the next champ would come from the Western Conference, mainly due to the inferiority complex the East has been reeling from during the past decade or so. And who could argue with players like Kevin Garnett, Kobe Bryant, Shaq O'Neal and Tim Duncan, all poised and focused on winning the whole thing? >>

It's all about the D



But there has always been one constant saying through the years: "Defense wins championships." If there was one staple — one trademark — for this Pistons squad, it was defense.

Suffocating, swarming — whatever you want to call it, Detroit did it.

But they weren't the championship team they are now back when the season began. And if you take it a step further back, many critics were up in arms when the Pistons passed on star Carmelo Anthony and instead chose teen center Darko Milicic. But GM Joe Dumars knew exactly what was going on. He had to — he was running the show. Instead of Anthony, Dumars kept his faith in Tayshaun Prince and his overall impressive game. (Poker players envy moves such as this.) As it turned out, Prince would be a major contributor on both ends of the court for Detroit this year.

At the season's tip-off, though, Indiana and New Jersey were considered the favorites in the "weak and feeble East." Even though Chauncey Billups and Richard Hamilton were arguably the best backcourt coming in, the Pistons were not much besides that. That's where a move like bringing in coach Larry Brown paid off in the grandest of ways.

Dumars felt the change was necessary even after previous head coach Rick Carlisle helped build the team and won games. Carlisle was loved by many players, and nobody was quite sure how the Pistons would react. Even after a 54-28 regular season, the Pistons were only good enough to snag the third spot in the East, which meant any title hopes had to go through either New Jersey or Indiana. Fortunately, Brown's style and successful role as a consummate teacher for 22 years created a safe haven for players to retreat to and respect — and got results.

Bringing in Rasheed Wallace was easily the most pivotal move during the NBA trade season. It was also a vivid example of what can happen when a good player who has been trapped under his own self-inflicted misfortunes can flourish under a good system with the right people in place. It wasn't so much the fact that Wallace was a seasoned veteran who was a star in his own right; but his size, defensive tenacity and constant fiery emotion were the main attributes that would benefit Detroit. With his head >>

WALLACE
3
30
22

It's all about the D

screwed on straight and his mouth shut at the right times, there was no telling what could be accomplished. The addition of Rasheed meant all eyes now turned to the Pistons, who were finally among the favorites.

Further, when you consider a frontcourt of Wallace, Prince and NBA Defensive Player of the Year Ben Wallace, this lineup had the makings of a tough, blue collar, get-your-hands-dirty-type team.

Ben Wallace is one of a handful of players in the game who can alter the outcome without even scoring a basket. His whole life is basketball, and he has an enviable hard hat work ethic as seen by the way he mans the middle with both ferocity and speed.

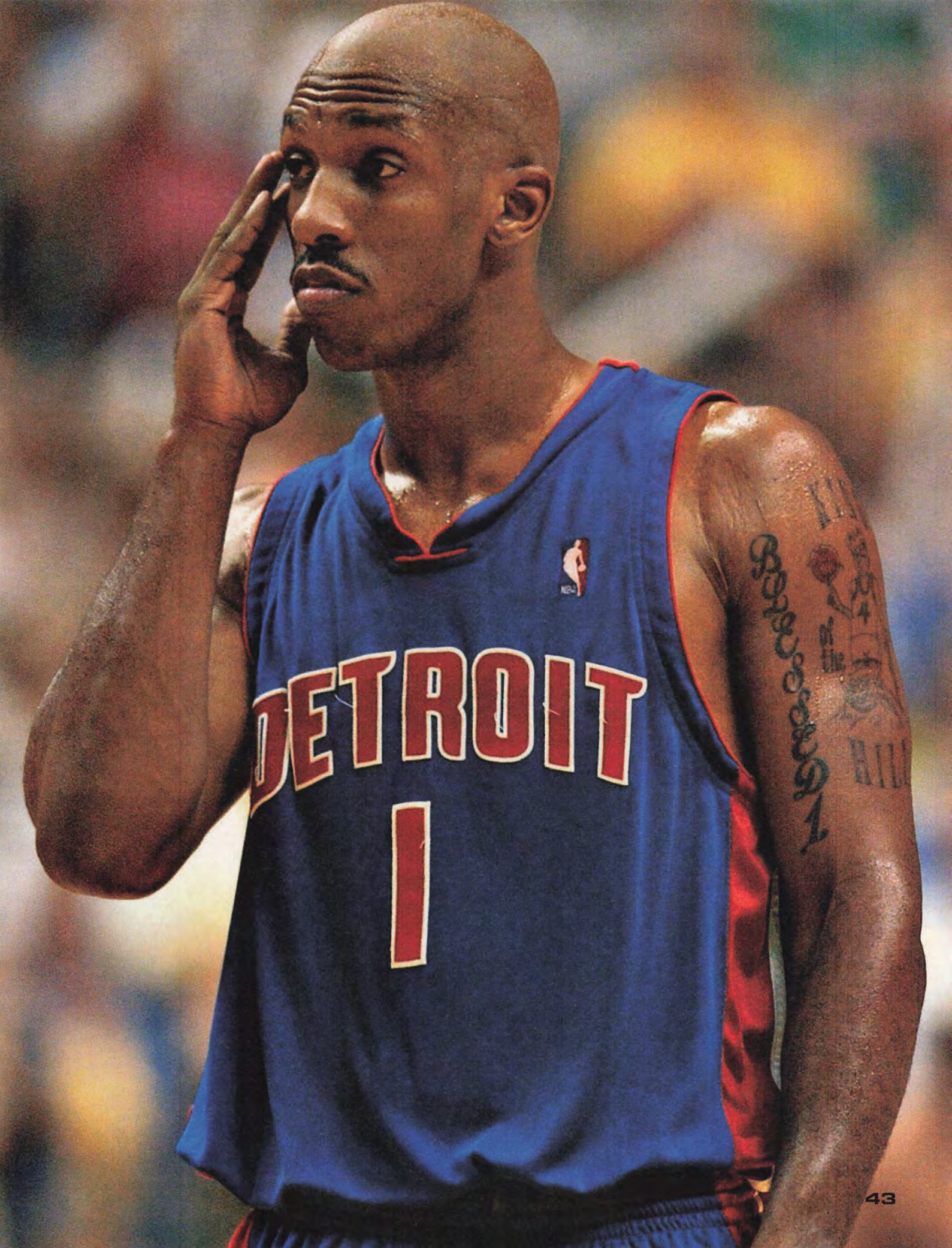
Still, through most of the regular season, Detroit played second fiddle to division foe Indiana. Talk about irony: The recently-displaced coach Rick Carlisle was now roaming the sideline for the Pacers, under the tutelage of one Larry Bird.

What most people didn't realize, however, was how athletic this Pistons club was. Chauncey Billups, whose "shoot first, pass second" approach was just what was needed on a team with only one other true scorer, Rip Hamilton. Billups had tendency to be streaky throughout the 82 game grind, but there wasn't a guard in the game who could push him around.

As expected, Detroit was a major player in the 2003-04 regular season, but there were only a few who thought the drought of 14 years without a championship might end this year. The right moves made by GM Joe Dumars, and the right system implemented and taught by the great Larry Brown, were both part of the formula for success.

But this team was all about defense, and no team played it better in the regular season. The string of sub-70 games, the player awards, the team accolades... it all began with a defensive mindset. Opponents barely cracked 90 on the average, and always knew they were in for a tussle against the Pistons.

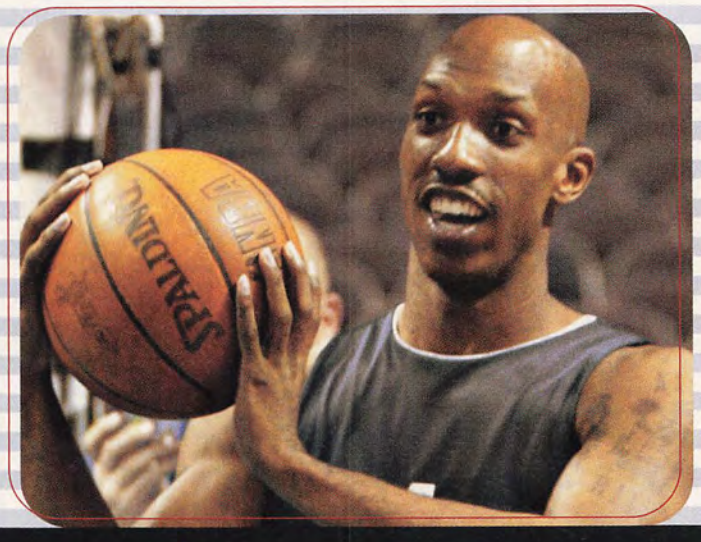
The players in the clubhouse knew what kind of team they were a part of; now it was just a matter of going out and showing the world. This wasn't the Bad Boys of the 80s all over again. Brown molded a team with a different identity, but from the same philosophy: Defense. And as any Pistons fan will tell you, both versions look mighty nice holding the NBA Championship trophy. ■


DETROIT
1

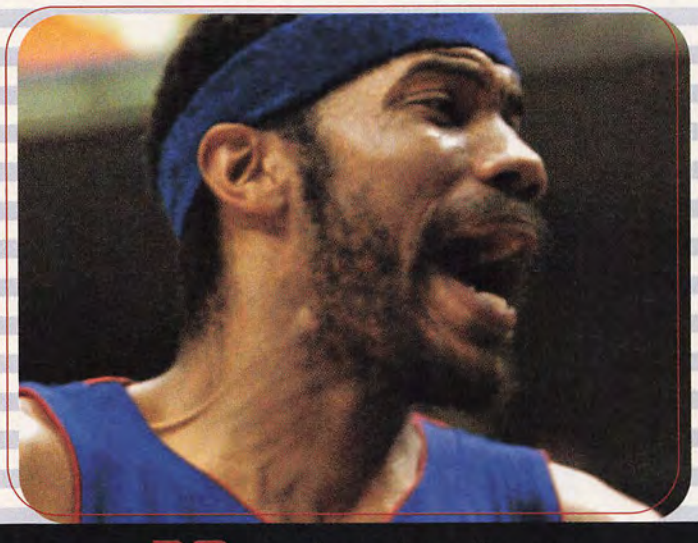
2003-2004 Pistons ROSTER

Head Coach Larry Brown

32 Richard Hamilton

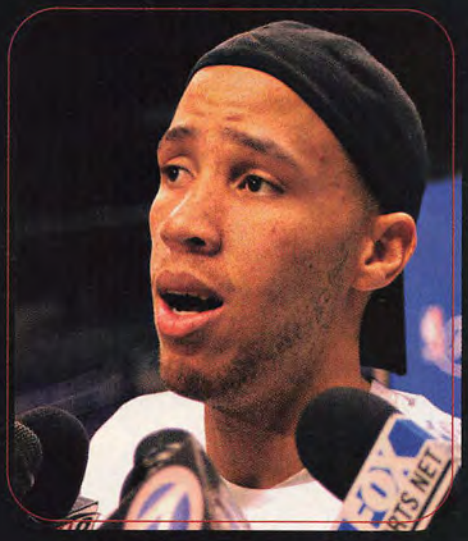


1 Chauncey Billups



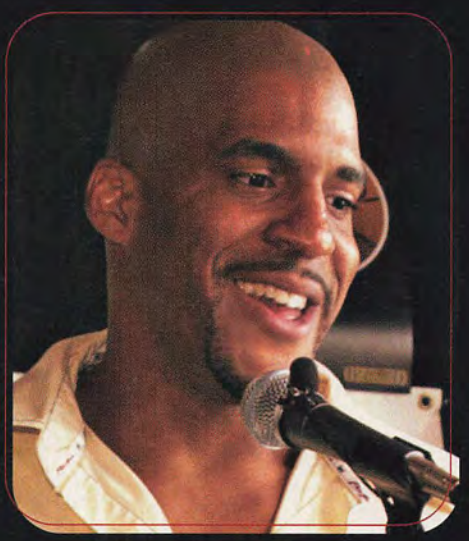
30 Rasheed Wallace

3 Ben Wallace



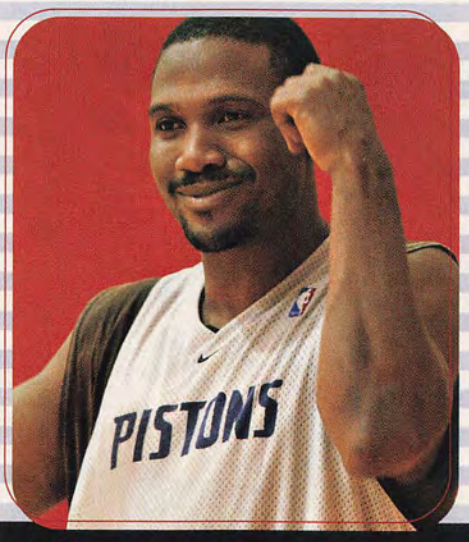
22 Tayshaun Prince

13 Mehmet Okur

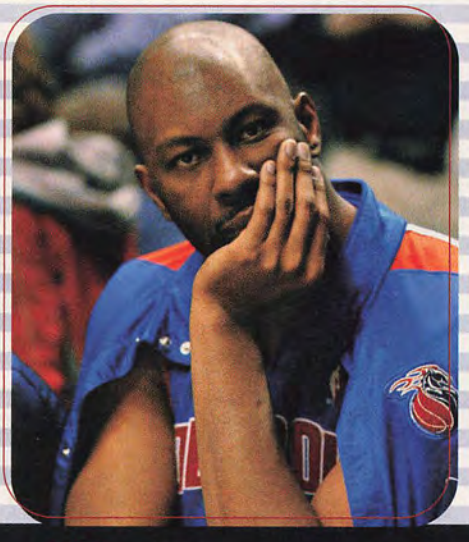


34 Corliss Williamson

7 Mike James

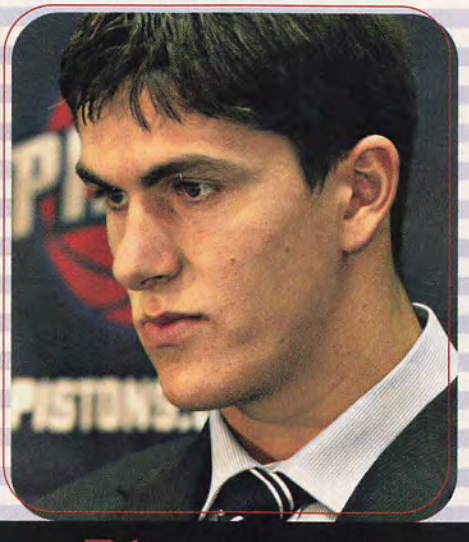


10 Lindsey Hunter



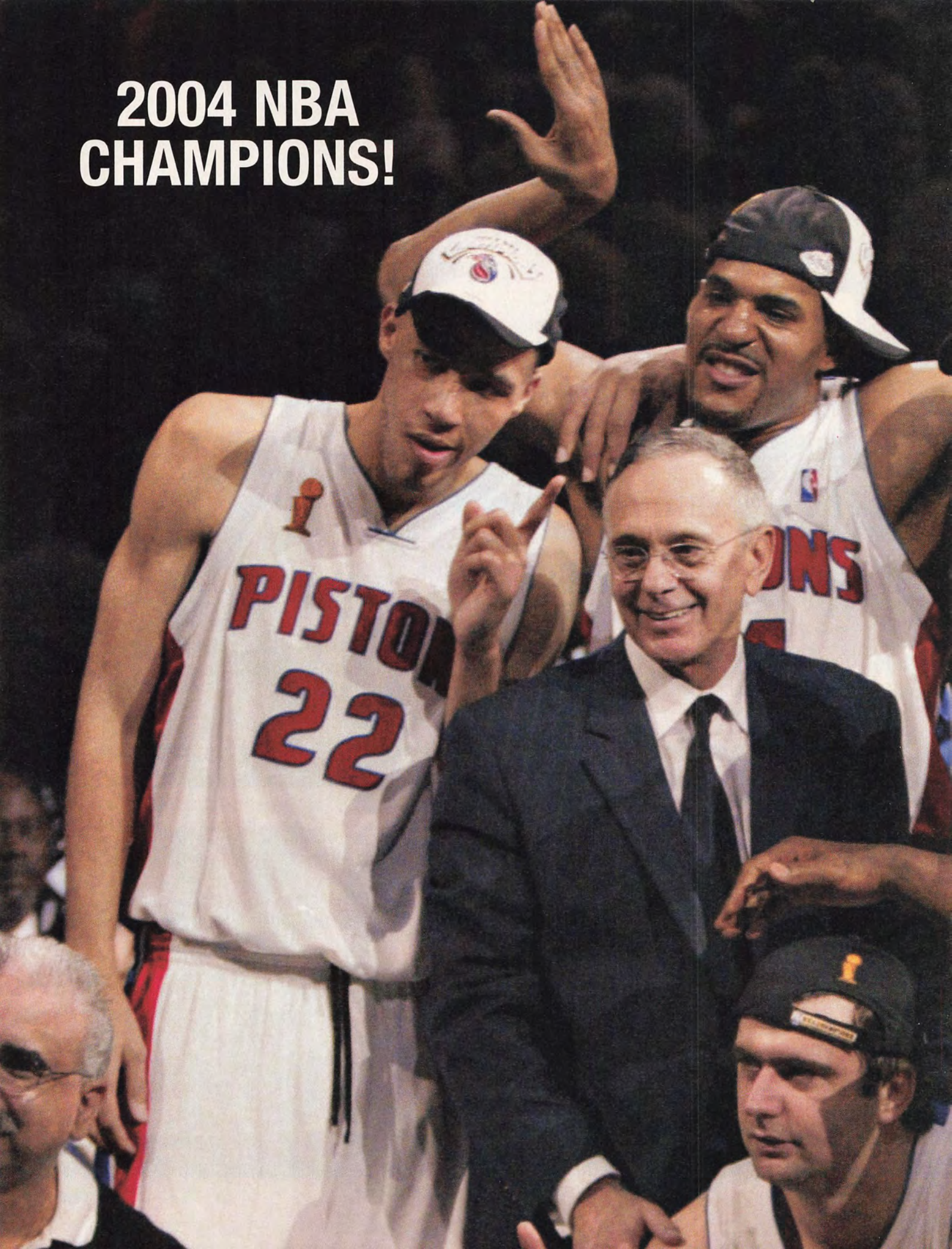
41 Elden Campbel

8 Darvin Ham

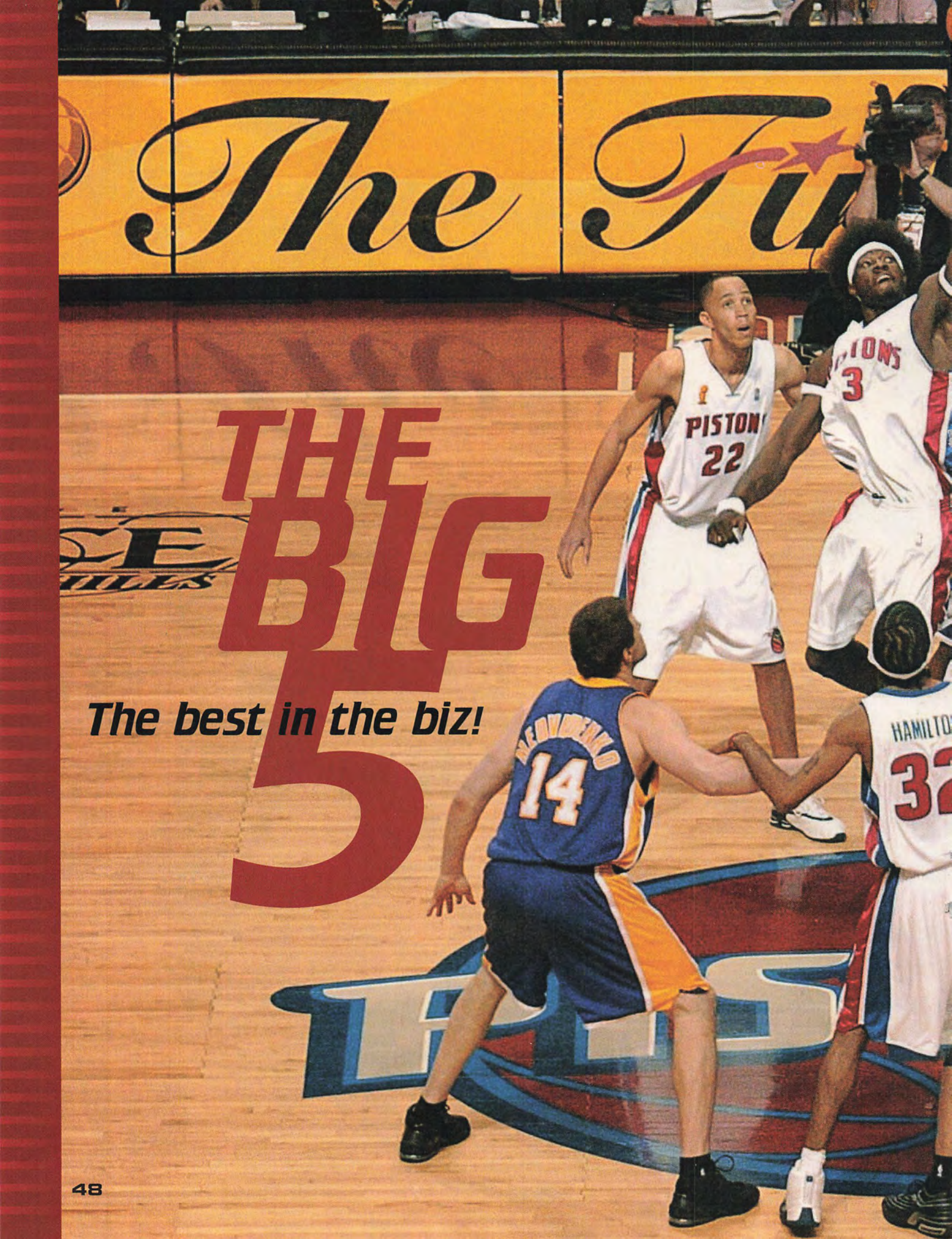


31 Darko Milicic

24 Tremaine Fowlkes

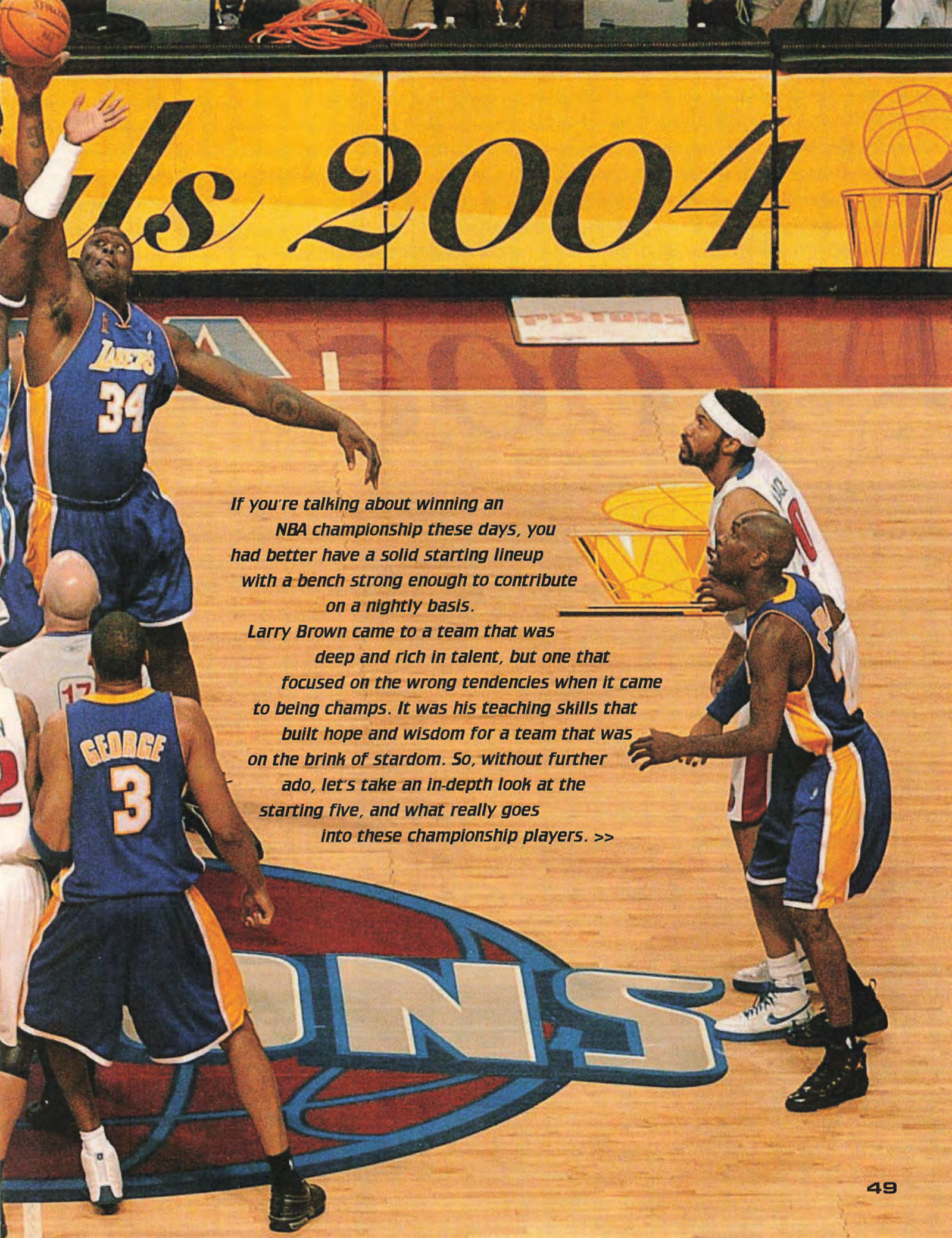

2004 NBA
CHAMPIONS!
PISTON
22

2004 NBA
CHAMPIONS
PISTONS
PISTONS
PISTONS
30

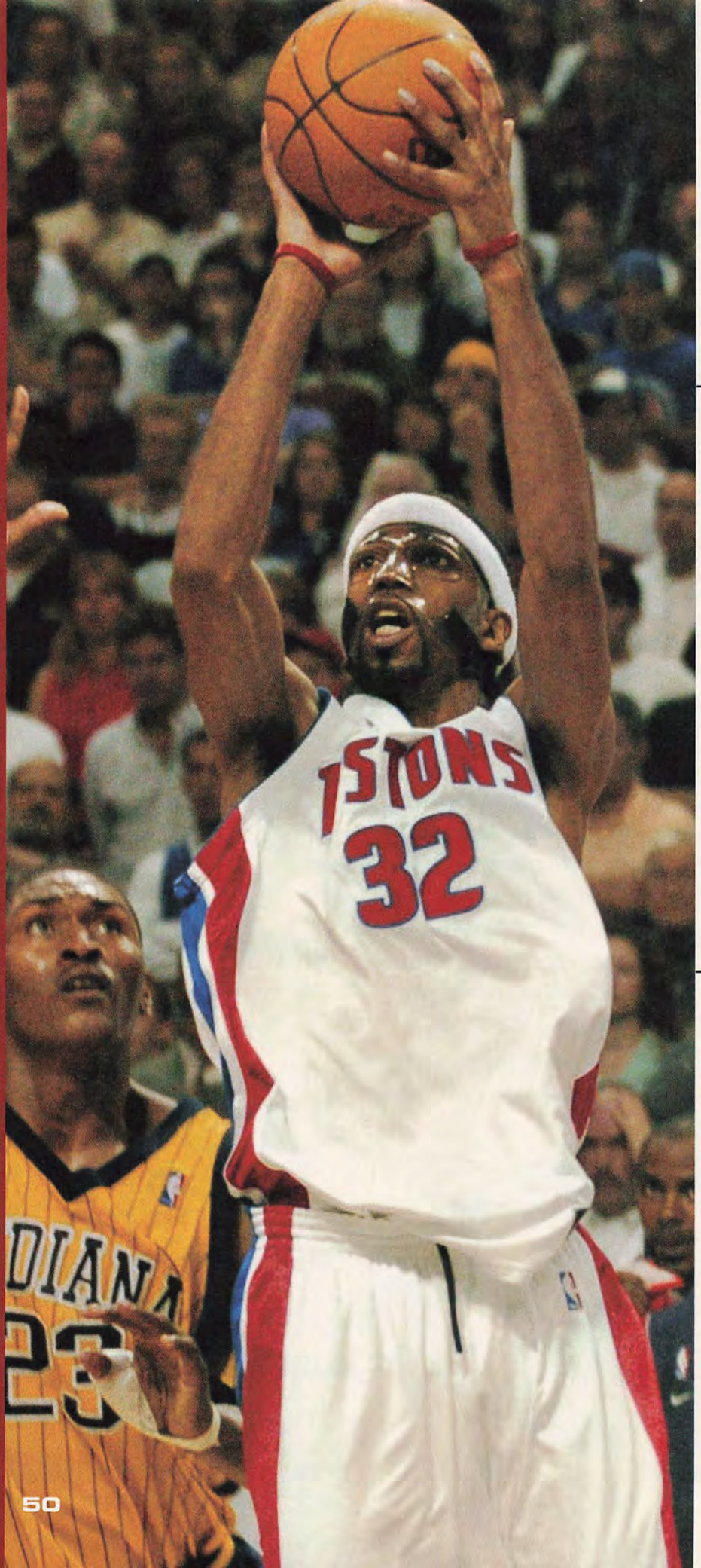


THE BIG 5

The best in the biz!



If you're talking about winning an NBA championship these days, you had better have a solid starting lineup with a bench strong enough to contribute on a nightly basis. Larry Brown came to a team that was deep and rich in talent, but one that focused on the wrong tendencies when it came to being champs. It was his teaching skills that built hope and wisdom for a team that was on the brink of stardom. So, without further ado, let's take an in-depth look at the starting five, and what really goes into these championship players. >>



THE BIG 5

The best in the biz!

Chauncey Billups PG

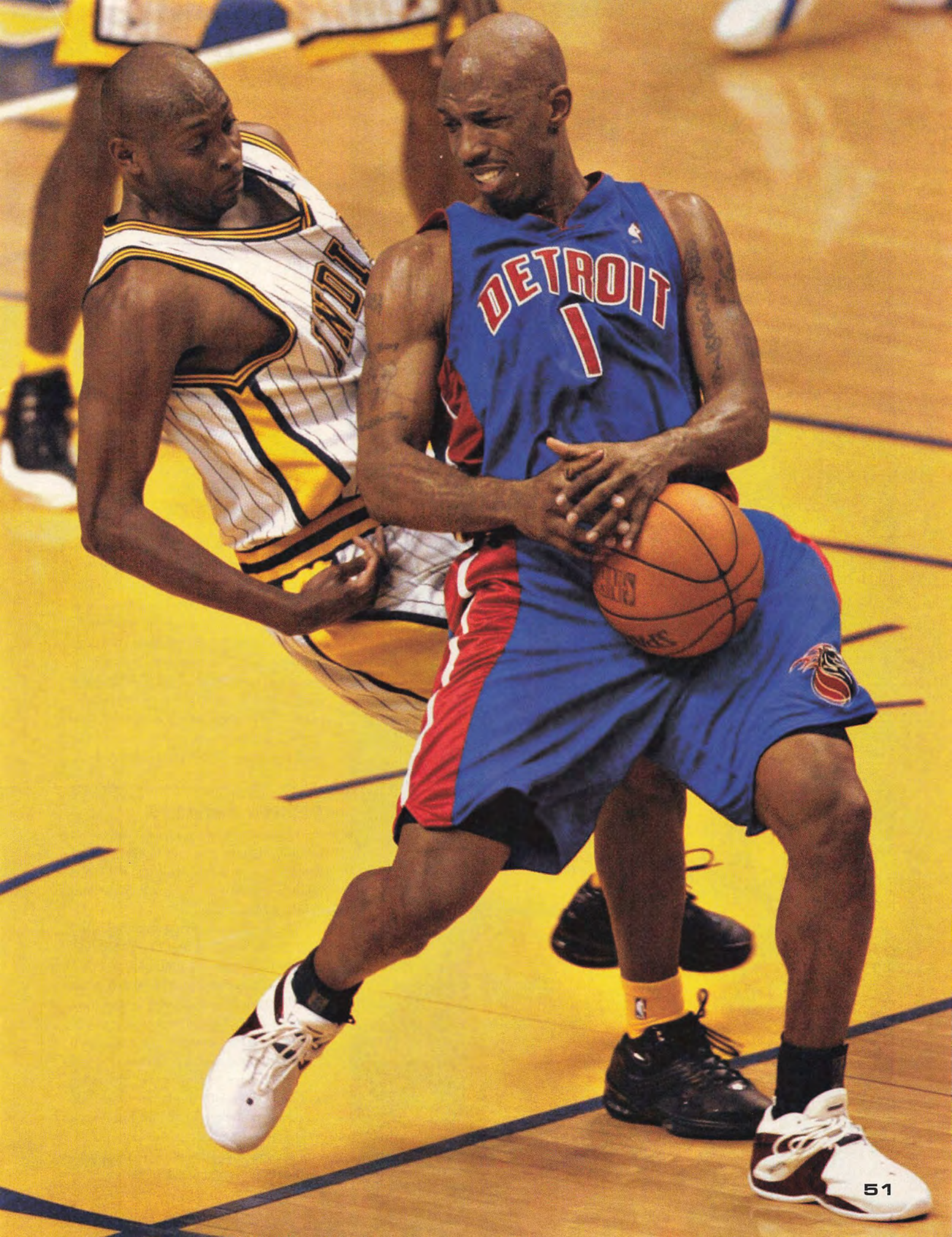
One of the few point guards in the league who does more damage with his shot than with his pass. Billups is much stronger than most at his position as he can cut and slash to the hoop or settle for the long distance jumper. Either way you slice it, Billups is a top five player at the point guard slot. On top of that, he was Finals MVP and averaged 21 points a game being guarded by the likes of Gary Payton and Kobe Bryant. If the Pistons needed a big shot to bail them out, Billups was the man for the job.

He said it best after the Finals, "We believe we're a better team. They may have a few better players individually, but we feel we're the best cohesive team out there." Couldn't have said it better, and every great team must have a solid backcourt. Billups and Hamilton are quite a duo.

Richard Hamilton SG

He's not big, he doesn't have the best all-around game, but the Pistons are thanking Michael Jordan each day for trading him for Jerry Stackhouse a few years back. Hamilton gets his shot off quickly, which makes it really tough to guard him when he's coming off screens and darting in and out of the lane. He's money from the foul line, and his small frame means nothing when he steps out on the court.

Rip is the most consistent scorer the Pistons have on the roster. "I wish I could cut this down to 13 pieces, because we all did this together," said Billups after being awarded the Finals MVP trophy. Well, if you cut it up, give the biggest chunk to Hamilton, because without his consistency, none of this would have ever happened.>>


DETROIT
1

THE BIG 5

The best in the biz!

Tayshaun Prince SF

Remember the Jordan rules? Well, Prince devised his own rules when it came to stopping Kobe Bryant on the offensive end. Prince is extremely long, and his wingspan gives players like Bryant a world of trouble when lined up one-on-one. Prince has the best overall game of any Piston. He can step out and knock a three down or post you up with his long arms.

Prince is left-handed, so that's an advantage in a league full of right-handed players. It was his block on Reggie Miller's lay-up that preserved a Game 2 win in the East Finals and stole home court advantage for Detroit. GM Joe Dumars put the pressure on Prince when he passed on instant star Carmelo Anthony. The only stars we're talking about these days are the Pistons and Prince, who is young, athletic and will be a cornerstone for the future in Motown.

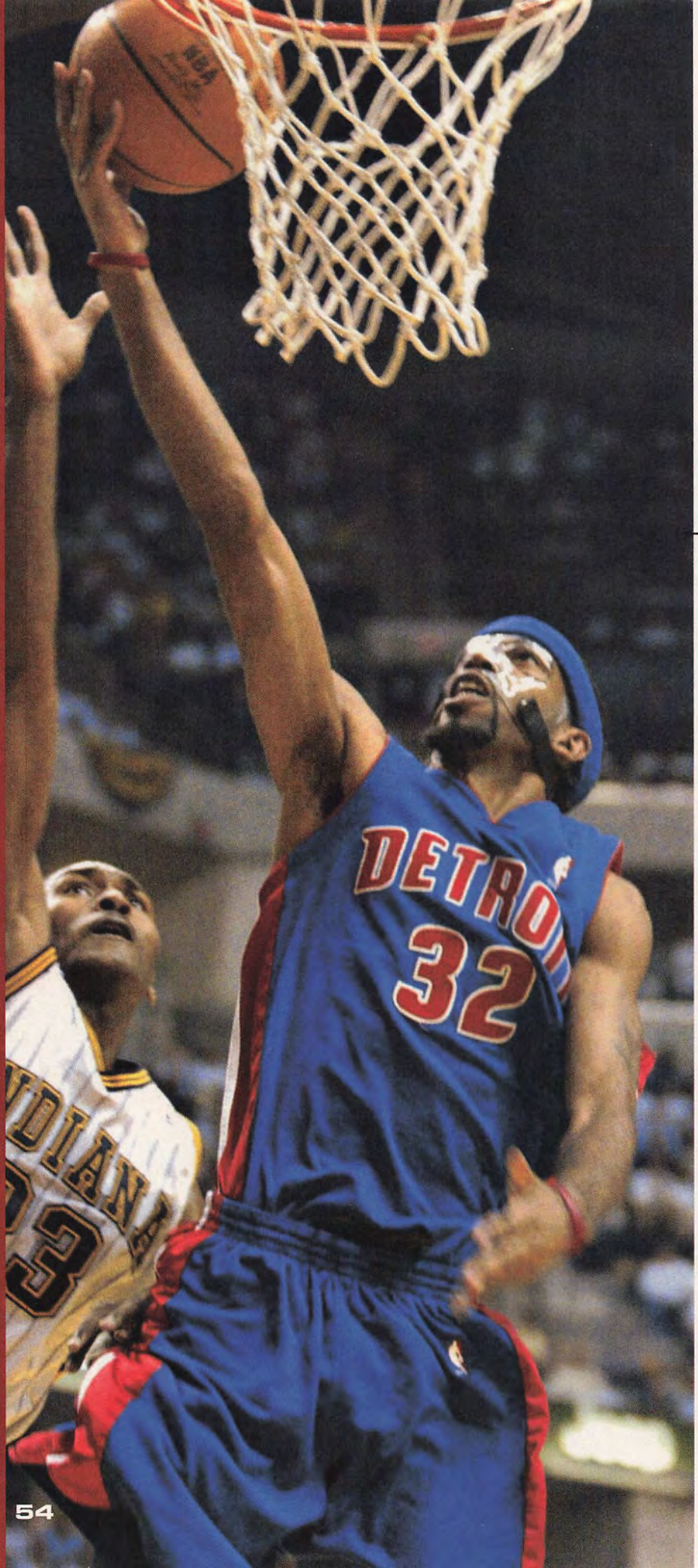
Rasheed Wallace PF

Wallace was the missing link that put the Pistons over the top. He spiced things up as he became part of one nasty frontcourt with Ben Wallace and Prince on his side.

There is no denying the fact that Wallace is a great talent, but he's a different kind of talent. As much as he's outspoken — he predicted a playoff win that came through — and volatile at times, Rasheed works best within a team system and philosophy. And who better to teach team systems than Larry Brown.

'Sheed lives to play on the defensive end, and even with his large frame, has no problem stepping out and living with the jumper. He also has the skill to take over games, and the ability to disappear early with foul trouble like he did early >>

DETROIT
30



THE BIG 5

The best in the biz!

on in the Finals. But Wallace behaved himself and became an NBA champ, probably a lot faster than most would have thought. There was no bigger trade in the league this year than the one that brought Wallace to the Motor City.

Ben Wallace C

The symbol of what Detroit basketball stands for, Wallace was an undrafted free agent out of a small school called Virginia Union.

He's an unselfish leader who does all the dirty work, night in and night out. He's also arguably the game's best defender, at the top each year in blocks and boards combined. Moreover, Wallace is a role model and fixture for young players — or what they should want to be.

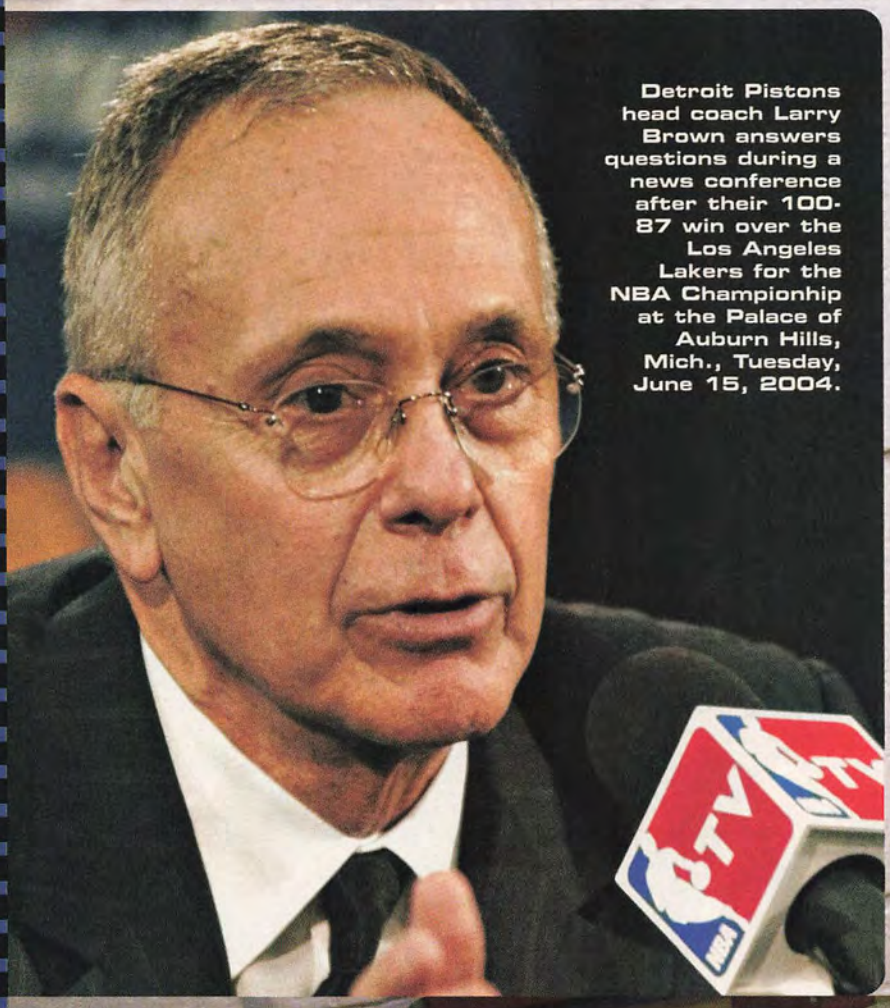
He's worked for everything, and is exactly the type of player the NBA needs. Big Ben can go scoreless in a game, yet decide he outcome with his sheer determination and commitment to winning. He will occasionally score on putbacks and short jumpers, but his game is a dirty variety: tearing down rebounds, blocking shots, and intimidating foes who drive the lane. He has a workman-like attitude that can't be shaken, even when guarding O'Neal and giving away over 70 pounds.

Every team needs a Ben Wallace, and all championship teams have had one. But nobody plays the role better than this man from White Hall, Alabama. ■

WALLACE
3

DETROIT
30

Brown Wins "the right way"

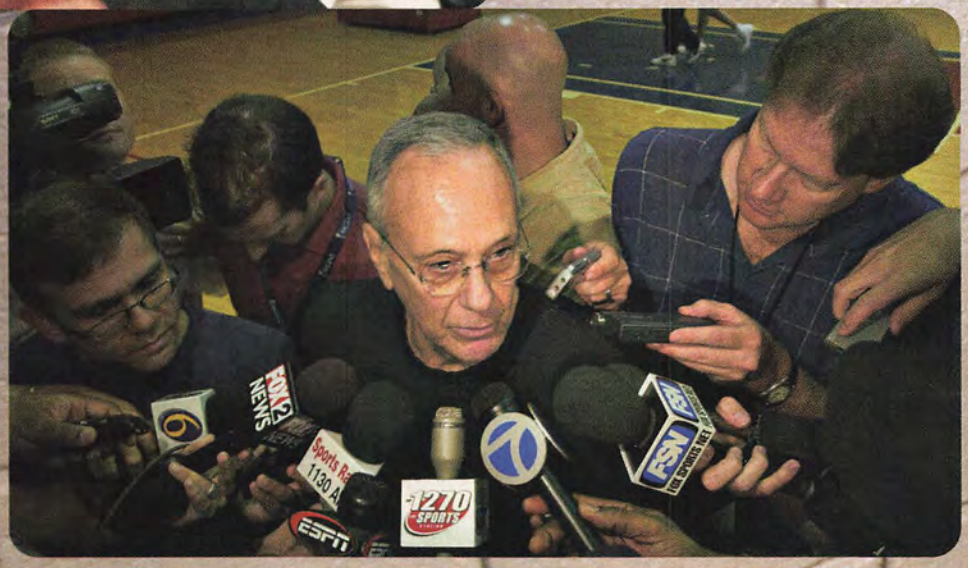


Detroit Pistons head coach Larry Brown answers questions during a news conference after their 100-87 win over the Los Angeles Lakers for the NBA Championhip at the Palace of Auburn Hills, Mich., Tuesday, June 15, 2004.

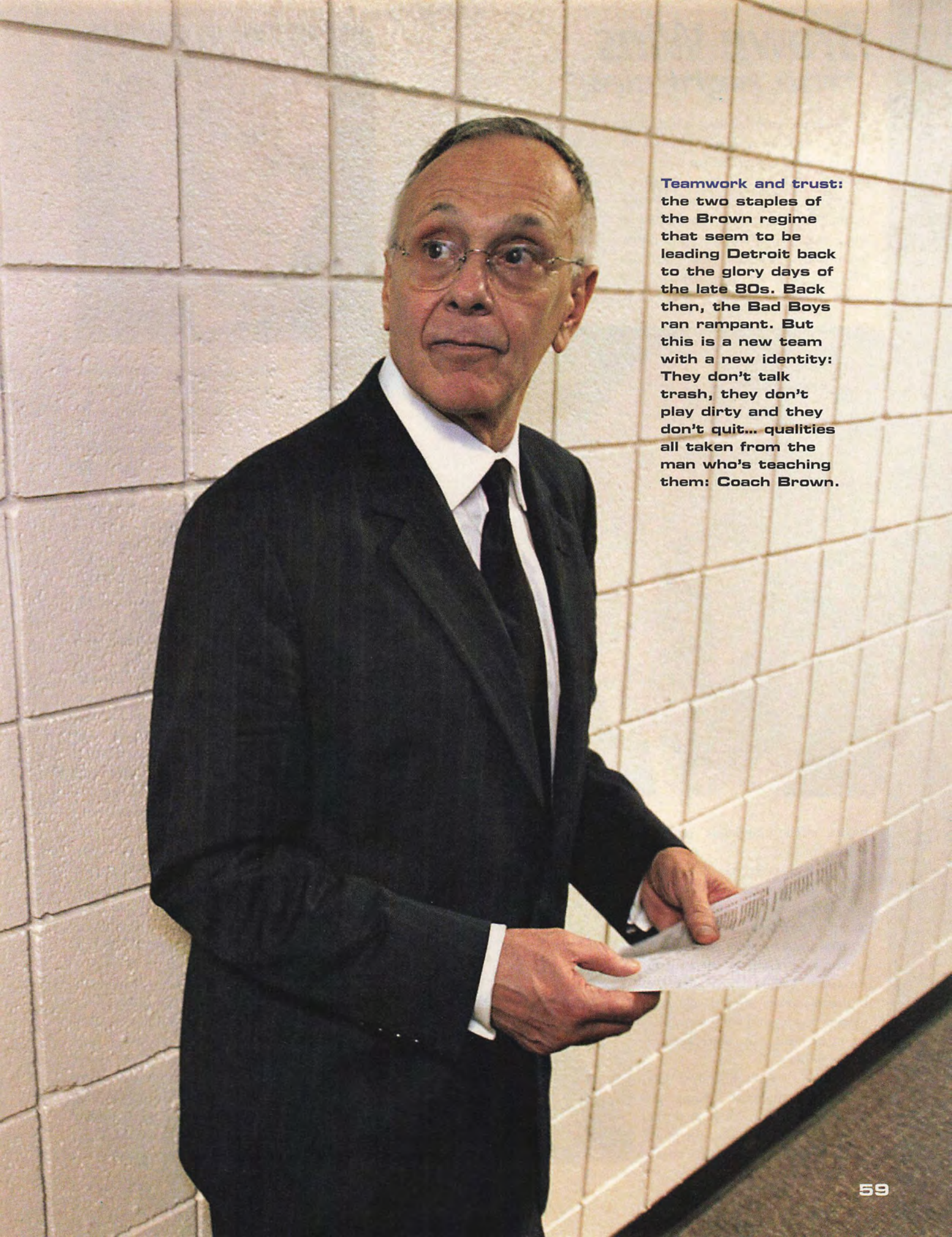
For any coach to succeed at any level, he or she must display a world of discipline and create an atmosphere in which the entire team — not just the biggest stars — can positively thrive. When it comes to guiding and providing, in his 22 years as an NBA coach, Larry Brown has made all the right moves at exactly the right time.

Brown, who made six stops before this magical ride in his coaching career, never had a chance to fully absorb what it meant to be a champion.

With a complete drubbing of the Los Angeles Lakers, Coach Brown will finally be able to live a dream that has been elusive throughout the years. "I haven't in my life had disappointments too many times coaching this game," Brown said. "I told them, you know, before the game, it would be a great statement if we had an opportunity to win because we do play the right way, and we are truly a team." >>



Brown talks to the media after the Pistons' team practice in Auburn Hills, Mich., Friday, June 4, 2004.



Teamwork and trust: the two staples of the Brown regime that seem to be leading Detroit back to the glory days of the late 80s. Back then, the Bad Boys ran rampant. But this is a new team with a new identity: They don't talk trash, they don't play dirty and they don't quit... qualities all taken from the man who's teaching them: Coach Brown.

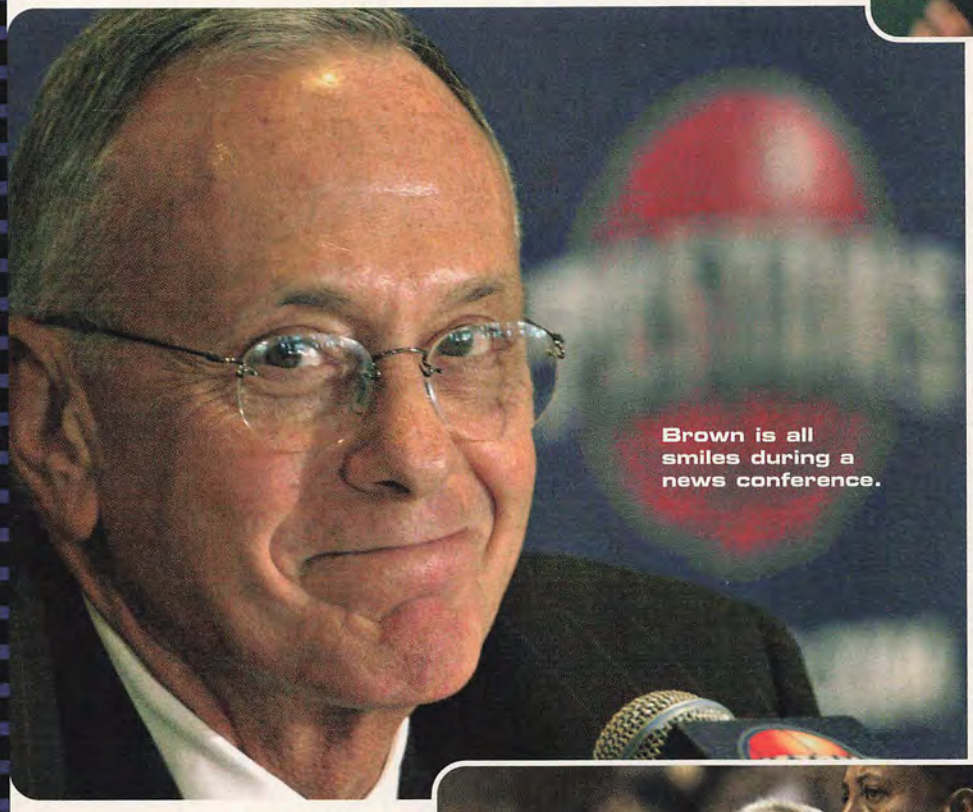
Brown Wins
"the right way"

Sure, the wait was long — it took 22 years to capture a crown, but not for lack of trying. In fact, Brown is the only coach in NBA history who has led six different teams to the playoffs. He also became the ninth coach in history to win a title in the first year with a new team; and is the first to win both an NBA and an NCAA title, making Larry Brown a true rarity when it comes to having such remarkable success at multiple levels.

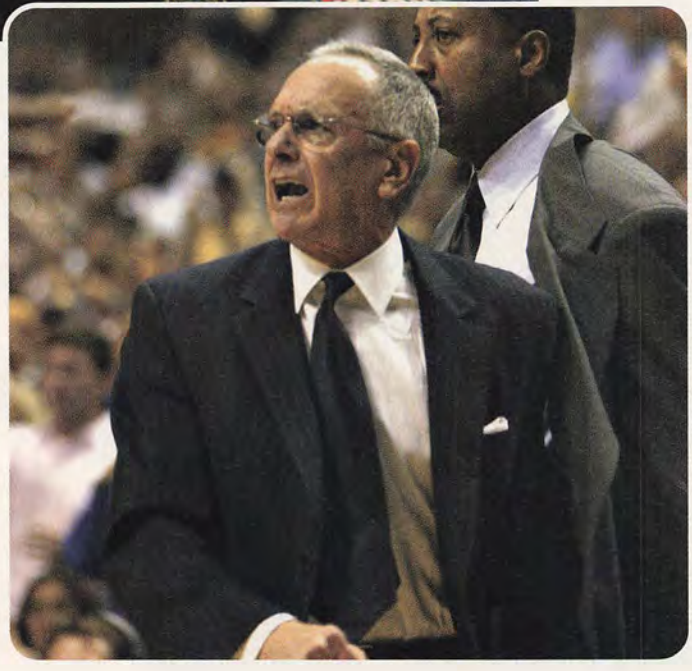
In the most recent off-season, GM Joe Dumars had a tough decision to make: Keep Rick Carlisle, who had the Pistons on track to win 50-plus games for the next couple of years; or bring in the veteran Brown, a Hall-of-Famer and the ultimate teacher when it comes to players buying into his system.

In the end, the choice seemed all too perfect.

Brown brought his street-like defensive mentality to a team that had its own immovable force in the middle with Ben Wallace. The other Wallace, Rasheed, calls his coach the "best pound-for-pound coach in the game. Who can argue with him? Brown stepped into a position that wasn't easy, replacing a coach who had solid success a year earlier. But Dumars knew exactly what he was getting in return. And as the NBA Finals moved along, you could see which way this drama was playing out.



Brown is all smiles during a news conference.



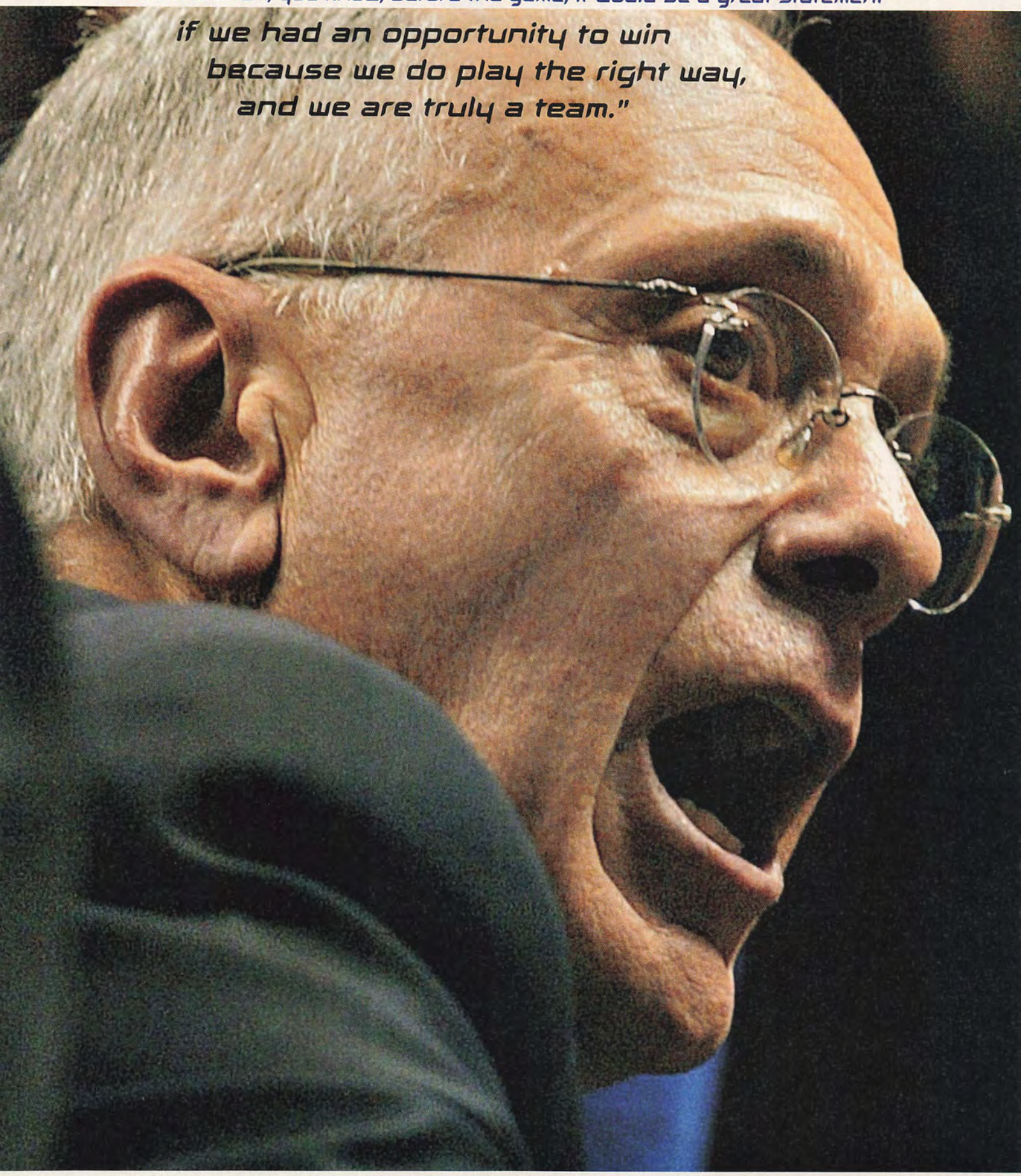
"LB showed America how basketball should be played," said Pistons guard Richard Hamilton. That pretty much sums things up for a championship season. Too, there is no better compliment than words like those coming from a star player who sunk his teeth into the "team first, defense second" mentality.

"I've been taught my whole career, it's really not about me, it's about these players," Brown has said. It's true that a great coach should never overshadow his players — his job is to lead, discipline and motivate the team as a whole.

His first words after Detroit put away the Lakers came in the form of a compliment to Carlisle and the job he did putting together this team. "This sport is about playing the right way and showing kids you can be a team and be successful."

Teamwork and trust: the two staples of the Brown regime that seem to be leading Detroit back to the glory days of the late 80s. Back then, the Bad Boys ran rampant. But this is a new team with a new identity: They don't talk trash, they don't play dirty and they don't quit... qualities all taken from the man who's teaching them: Coach Brown. ■

"I haven't in my life had disappointments too many times coaching this game...
...I told them, you know, before the game, it would be a great statement



if we had an opportunity to win
because we do play the right way,
and we are truly a team."

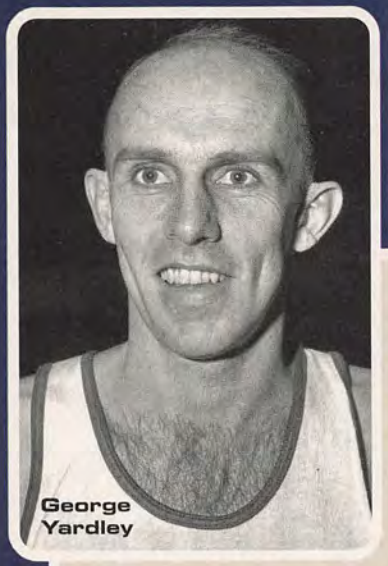
A look back at the Pistons

1940s

Having an auto part for a namesake, you would expect the Detroit Pistons had been born and raised in the Motor City. But, no, this club has its origins in a much smaller town in an entirely different state. Christened in 1941 the Fort Wayne (as in Indiana) Zollner Pistons, the team was founded as part of the National Basketball League (NBL) by Fred Zollner who was — what else! — a manufacturer of automobile pistons.

The Pistons got off to a strong start with a winning season and even a place in the Finals their very first year — the first of ten times they would accomplish this. They went on to many playoff appearances throughout this decade, claiming back-to-back championships in 1944 and 1945.

In 1948, the Pistons switched membership to the Basketball Association of America (BAA), an organization that merged just one year later with the NBL to form the NBA.



George Yardley

1950s

The Pistons proved to be a strong contender in the new league, qualifying for the playoffs every year of this decade (clear through 1963, as a matter of fact) and getting into the NBA Finals twice. In 1955, they lost by only one point to the Syracuse Nationals, and they gave up the 1956 NBA Finals to the Philadelphia Warriors.

Several of the players from this era were standouts, including George Yardley, whose 27 points per game average in the 1957-58 season stood as a record until the early 1990s.

1960s

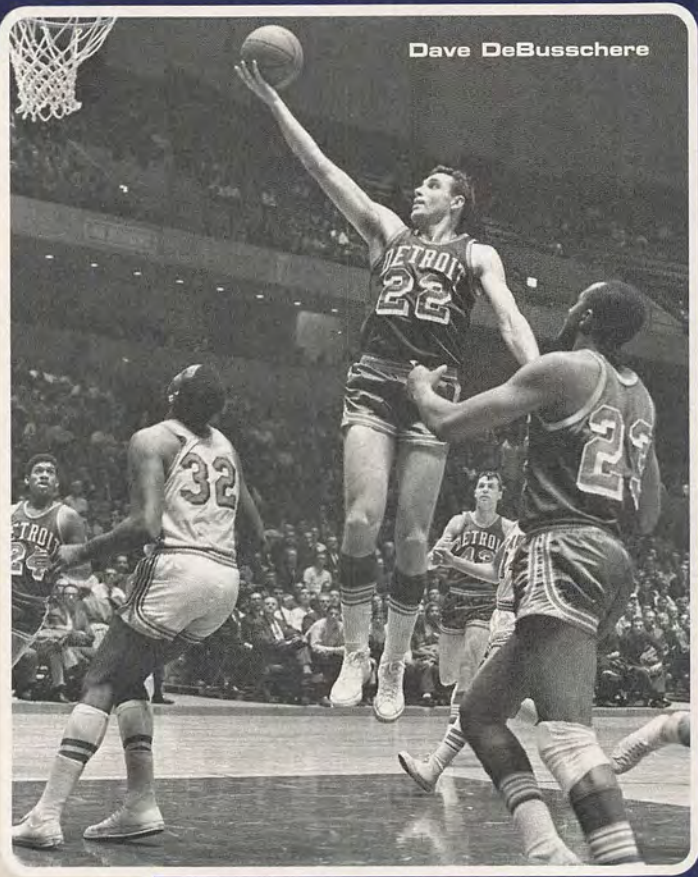
In 1957, the Pistons moved to Detroit, where they continued qualifying for the playoffs during the early 60s. However, the franchise experienced massive coaching turnover leading to — and, of course, caused by — many losing seasons. From the mid-1960s through the early 1970s, the Pistons were in a major slump.

In 1961, the team started playing in their new home, Cobo Arena, where they remained through 1978.

This decade marks an interesting chapter of NBA history. In 1962, the Pistons drafted Dave DeBusschere, who proved to be an outstanding all-around player — and not just of basketball! DeBusschere was also a pitcher for the Chicago White Sox, playing major-league baseball in 1962 and 1963 as well as two seasons in the minors.

But DeBusschere's story gets even more remarkable: While still playing basketball for Detroit, 24 year old DeBusschere was named player-coach during the 1964-65 season, making him the youngest coach in NBA history. His team won 29 more games that season — thanks in part to his influence — and Detroit finished the season with a 31-49 record.

Another notable player of this decade would be, of course, eventual hall-of-famer Dave Bing, selected by the Pistons as the number two NBA Draft Pick in 1966. During his tenure with the Pistons, Bing became one of the top scorers in the club's history.



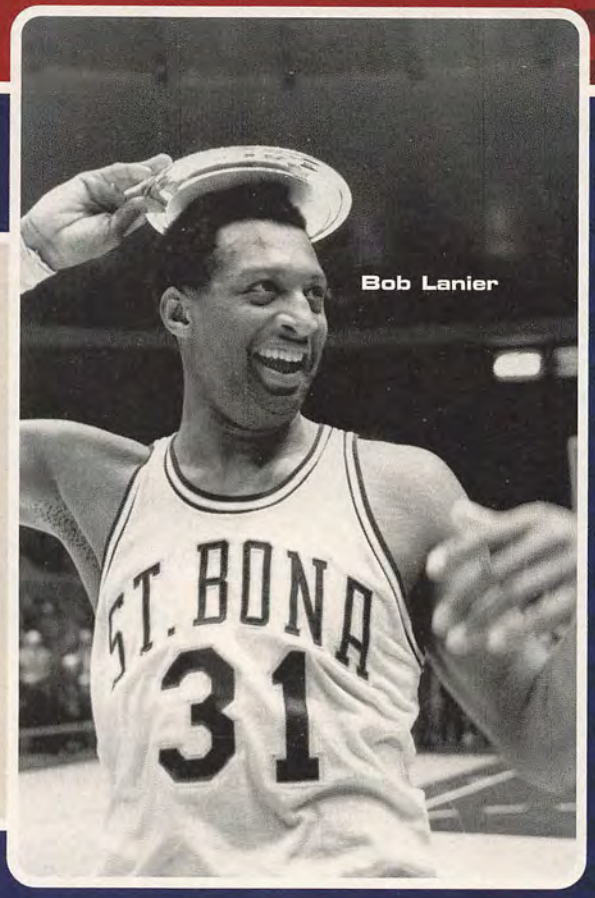
Dave DeBusschere

1970s

In 1970, Detroit had the number one pick in the NBA Draft. Their choice? Bob Lanier, another phenomenal scorer who attained All-Star status eight times in his career.

This decade saw four playoff qualifications for the Pistons from 1974 through 1977. Then in 1978, the Pistons relocated to the Pontiac Silverdome, where they were to stay for the next ten years. They also gained a new head coach: the soon-to-be-famous announcer and sports personality, Dick Vitale. Unfortunately, Vitale was unable to reverse the team's lackluster performance and Detroit ended the 1979-1980 season with the worst record of the NBA that season, and the worst season in Pistons' history.

Dick Vitale

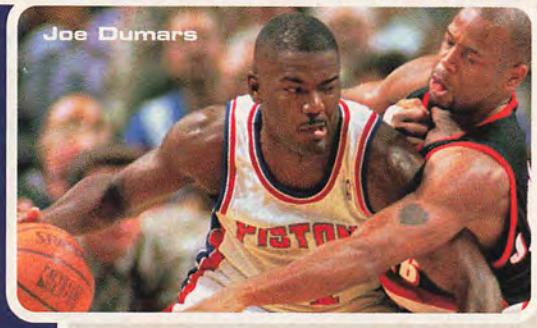


Bob Lanier

1980s

At last, there is light at the end of this tunnel. In the early 1980s, Detroit's draft picks and trades marked a round of fortuitous acquisitions — and brought about a change in fortune for the Pistons. Joining the club early in the decade were players Isaiah Thomas, Kelly Tripucka, Vinnie "The Microwave" Johnson and Bill Laimbeer. Head coach Chuck Daly signed in 1983 and led the team to the playoffs in 1984. By 1985, Detroit had also acquired Joe Dumars.

The legendary Bad Boys of Motor City had arrived.


Joe Dumars

In 1988 — for the first time in 30 years — Detroit earned a match-up in the NBA Finals, going against Los Angeles and conceding defeat only in Game 7 — and by just three points (108-105).

The Pistons started playing in their new arena, Palace of Auburn Hills, starting with the 1988-89 season. They achieved an all-time record for their club with 63 wins. This represented a phenomenal comeback, less than ten years after their worst record of all time! Their physical toughness and stellar work ethic proved a lethal combination.

Team stars Thomas, Laimbeer and Dumars were rounded out by a solid supporting cast in Johnson, Dennis Rodman, Rick Mahorn, James Edwards and John Salley. To cap off this glorious year, the Pistons breezed through to the NBA Finals and swept the Lakers 4-0 in a vindicating rematch. >>

A look back at the Pistons

1990s

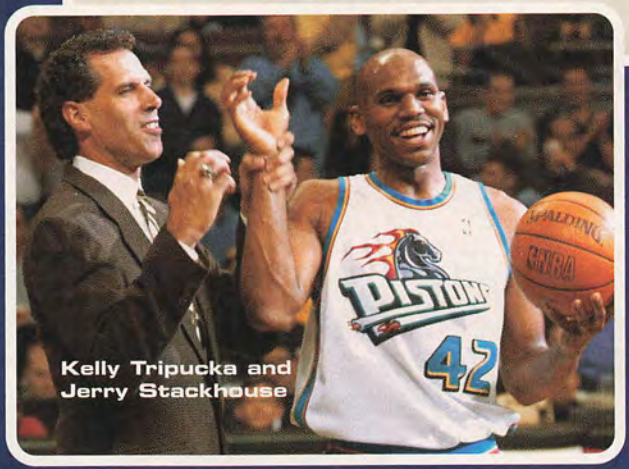
With their solid teamwork and powerful defense, Detroit took home the championship again in 1990, prevailing over Portland four games to one. After those back-to-back wins, however, the team's amazing force started to crack. Despite a strong winning regular season, the Pistons fell out of the playoffs with a loss to the Bulls in the 1991 conference finals.

Detroit didn't make it to the playoffs again until 1996, under the leadership of first-year coach Doug Collins. And then they did it again in 1997, capping off a strong season with 54 wins — coinciding with the rise of the versatile Grant Hill who recorded 13 triple-doubles in the 1996-97 season, averaging 21.4 points, 9.0 rebounds, 7.3 assists and 1.8 steals per game.

The end of this decade also marked the end of an era for Detroit, when gentleman Joe Dumars retired after a remarkable 14-year career. So remarkable, in fact, that in 2000, his #4 jersey was also retired. But Joe just couldn't stay away and soon came back — this time as the franchise's new President of Basketball Operations.

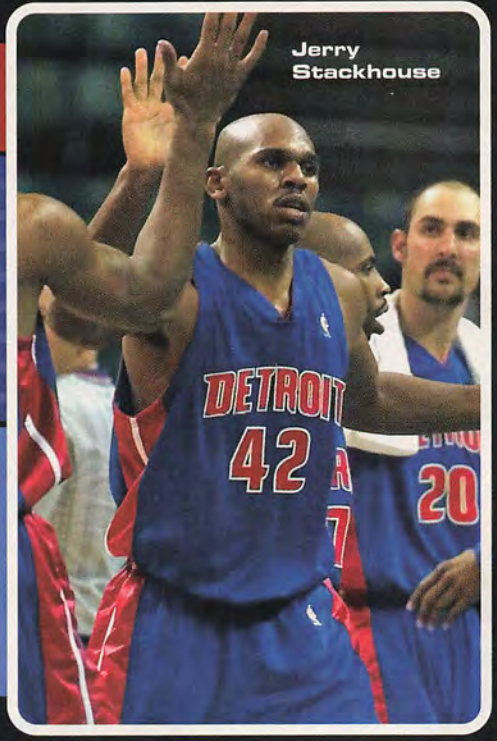
2000s

Detroit got off to a slow start with the 2000-2001 season, failing to make the playoffs for the first time in three years. But they turned it around in 2002, making it to the second round of playoffs for the first time since 1991 and earning the Central Division Championship. The Pistons picked up momentum through 2003, all the way to becoming back-to-back Central Division champions and finishing off one of their best seasons ever. Then came 2004's ultimate victory, when the team clinched the NBA title in Game 5.



PISTONS' TOP 10 SINGLE SEASON POINTS LEADERS *(per game)*

1	2000-01	Jerry Stackhouse	29.8
2	1957-58	George Yardley	27.8
3	1967-68	Dave Bing	27.1
4	1970-71	Dave Bing	27
5	1982-83	Kelly Tripucka	26.5
6	1971-72	Bob Lanier	25.7
7	1999-00	Grant Hill	25.7
8	1976-77	Bob Lanier	25.3
9	1977-78	Bob Lanier	24.5
10	1974-75	Bob Lanier	24



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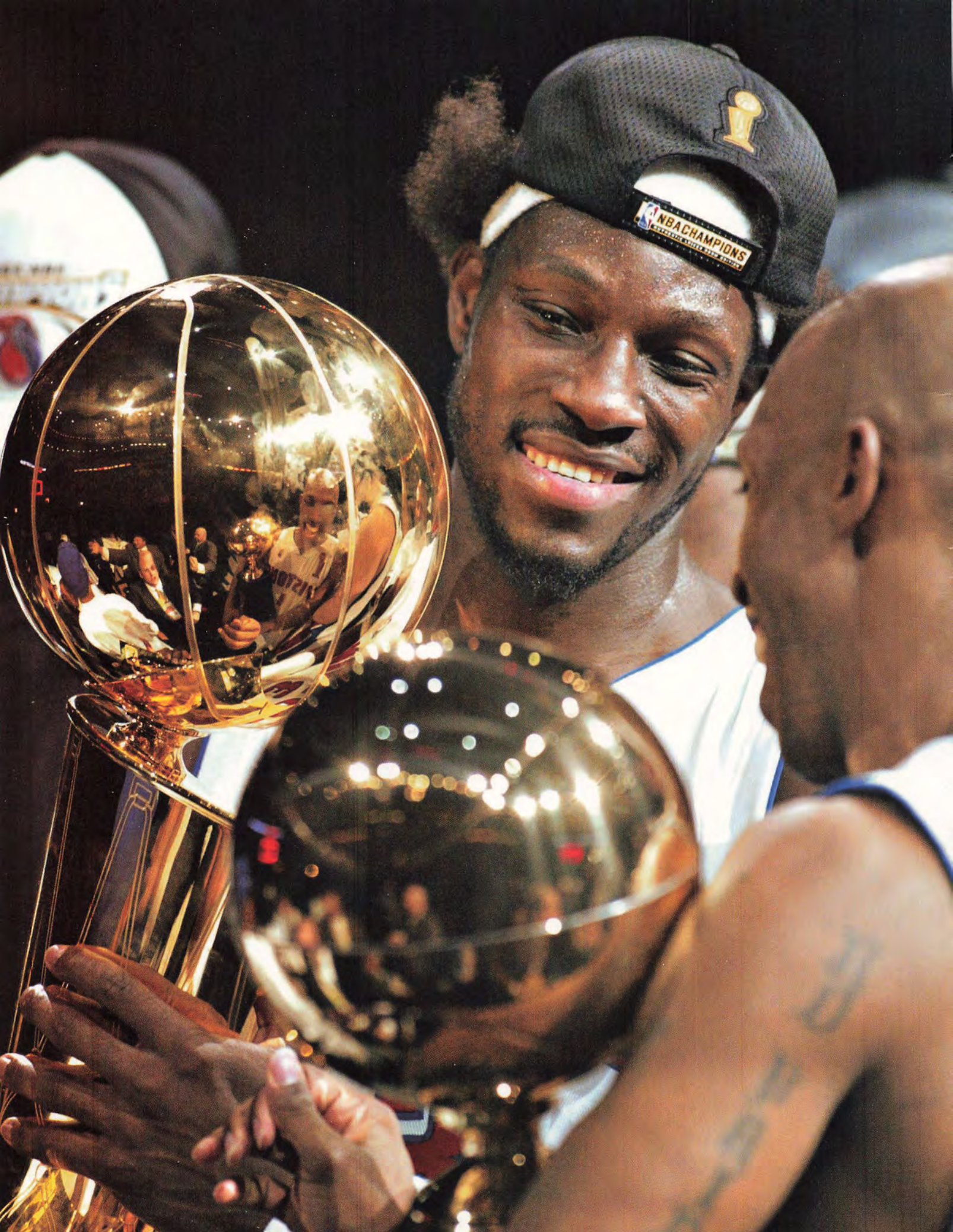
NBA CHAMPIONS